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The Ohio State University and Antioch College, Ph.D., 1970
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ON THE MARGIN OF PHILOSOPHY:

THE ABBÉ COYER IN THE FRENCH ENLIGHTENMENT

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Foreign Languages

by
Jane Payne Kaplan
B.A., University of North Carolina, 1959
January, 1970

Please Note;

This is original copy. Some pages have very light type. Filmed as received.

University Microfilms.

In honor of my parents, and
with humble thanks to my husband.

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ABSTRACT

In a century which, while boasting of its thinkers and philosophers, granted the special favor of glory to only a few among that number, there existed on the margin of the celebrated philosophers many writers who considered themselves members of that special group. Herein I have attempted a study of Gabriel François Coyer, author, and, as he described himself, "prêtre sans prêtrise". In reviewing the problems of those who chose writing as a profession in the eighteenth century, one can see how Coyer, like many authors, had difficulties with censorship, publishers, patrons, and with the psychological roadblocks that inevitably fell in his path. Looking at Coyer's life and his works we witness the manner in which he coped with the fact that he was not among the favored few who would remain indelibly imprinted upon the pages of literary history. His style reflected his problems as a marginal philosopher, and those which followed him as a personality living with an illustrious family, attending salons, seeking membership in academies. The abbé had a well-defined philosophy of literature. He spoke of it often in his writings, and in its own turn, his philosophy proffered much information about the author himself. Coyer's ideal

society showed him to be a man concerned with the amelioration of his era. This study of Gabriel François Coyer is not intended to prove that he was a suffering author misunderstood by his contemporaries; rather, to show that he is one example of a very large and important segment of French literary history which, with other similar examples, could open upon an untapped and exciting revelation of information valuable to the complete understanding of the century.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEMS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WRITER AND HIS EPOCH

Every literary century is outlined by the famous authors whose names and works outlive the institutions and practices of their era. The number who succeed in leaving their mark is infinitely small compared to the number who tried, rose for a short while and retreated to the ranks of the lesser known. Both the famous and the unknown spell out truths regarding life, desires, habits, shortcomings and capabilities of their contemporaries. It is a relative truth, necessarily biased by their own point of view, their private lives, and their temperaments. For that reason, when seeking the real substance of the life and times of a century, a reign or a decade, one must forge beyond the facade of what remains as literary history, crystallized after the passage of a certain amount of time, and delve into the richness of contemporary existence by means of the contemporaries themselves--the lesser known perhaps more than the celebrated ones. It is they who reflect the happenings and habits, the whims and disappointments that the writers in today's anthologies may not have considered important. These individuals are hard to find. Once found, they are frequently difficult to get to know due to the penury of material about their lives. Their least known

pieces may have disappeared entirely. They are valuable sources of information because they suffered through the same hardships as the now famous authors. They all ran the same risks, wrote for the same public, and fought to receive recognition in the same milieux. No matter what century encompasses their lives, these men of letters are the encyclopedia of its development. The changes they reflect are those which ultimately set the stage for the next generation.

The light of knowledge in the "siècle des lumières" often became a spotlight upon the philosophe whose contribution it describes. Candide, Figaro, Emile, even the Encyclopédie embody the charismatic personalities of their authors. The mere names of Voltaire, Beaumarchais, Rousseau and Diderot command attention, just as did Corneille or Racine in the seventeenth century. But in the case of the seventeenth century writer, the man of letters was often a recluse, famous only for his literary contributions. His eighteenth century counterpart changed the image of the scholar in public opinion: no longer solitary, he became engagé, especially in the latter half of the century. Corneille and Racine can erroneously represent the body of classical tragedy, or even the whole of neo-classical drama. Contrary to this monolithic classification, the following century encouraged multiplicity in performance and popularity; many authors shared the public eye in a given genre, and many authors were talented in several genres at the same time.

In the eighteenth century the company of the man of letters was sought after, considered prestigious. It meant

something to be able to tell how many authors received one's patronage. Men of letters were found wherever intellectual conversations had free reign. The creation of salons, clubs, dinners, academies, intellectual and scientific organizations offer concrete testimonies to their union with contemporary society.[1]

Public taste and desires changed as well as the personal qualities of writers. Obviously not everyone was creative. Certainly the reading public was small and of unequal education. Although interest in the sciences, intellectual and experimental, expanded, the desires of the reading public were as diverse as the organizations which favored them. Ways of thinking and philosophies, if philosophies they were, varied according to the circles of society in which one traveled. Duclos describes the cultivation of those who publicized their thoughts and sought patronage:

> "Le goût des Lettres, des Sciences et des Arts, a gagné insensiblement, & il est venu à un point, que ceux qui ne l'ont pas d'inclination, l'affectent par air. On a donc recherché ceux qui les cultivent, & ils ont été attirés dans le monde à proportion de l'agrément qu'on a trouvé dans leur commerce."[2]

Despite the vastly different tastes and pleasures of society, there was a common measure of value. Duclos points out that men of letters were drawn into society in proportion to the amount of enjoyment which one derived from them, both as individuals, and from their works.[3] Who, then, pleased the eighteenth century intellectual or pseudo-intellectual? Which authors seduced the enlightened mentality? It was not

the true erudite. This type was hard to find because his endeavors were rarely appreciated or pursued. It was usually not the authors of sciences exactes, although their contributions were recognized and sometimes rewarded. The most desired company were the beaux esprits, whose name did not always fall easily from the tongue in association with the title philosophes.

The easiest to recognize are of course the shining personalities whose talents earned them lasting success. The public applauded the Montesquieus, Marmontels, d'Alemberts and Marivauxs. In another category were the authors whose words were deserving and nailed as successes, but whose presence contributed nothing to the social gathering. Much preferred was the writer "dont l'esprit est d'un usage plus varié, & d'une application moins décidée & plus étendue."[4] Journals such as Les Mémoires de Trévoux and le Journal des savants abound in comptes rendus of titles which have been forgotten, rarely resurrected for more than statistical studies or tedious monographs. These obscure, usually mediocre works, by authors without electrifying personalities or famous names, works which inspired their readers fleetingly and were never republished, can depict, however, the opinions and first impressions of the general public.[5]

The reactions of contemporary readers towards what they lived, saw and read are like the reflections in a house of mirrors where the same likeness is viewed from myriad angles, where each is different in its single aspect, and where no

clear path can be seen to point out the living image. The theses maintained by the great voices of the century to whom critics generally accord the paternity of their ideas, are rarely the creators of more than the scaffolding and structure of what is presented. A large portion of what the famous philosophes said had already been said before them. And what they said, representing the influential body of celebrated thinkers, was repeated, remoulded, viewed multifariously by the less original, lesser remembered writers, whom Mornet calls writers of "troisième ordre."[6] The classification and ranking of writers takes place as they become literary history, viewed by a posterity which finds a niche, a comfortable shelving, and gradually places lesser read works more and more out of reach, consequently narrowing down and simplifying for the readers who follow. The third rate writer may have had a brief sojourn with authors of premier ordre. The author wrote to please the public taste. The lesser known writers mirrored their society while spreading contemporary ideas and the thoughts of famous men among the salons and in the petite bourgeoisie.[7] Their books and leaflets became dog-eared and soiled as they traveled from hand to hand. One has only to consult the correspondences of the century to see that Thieriot received a pamphlet from Voltaire, read it and passed it on to Bouret or someone else.

While the polygraphe of short-lived fame served the purpose of reflecting contemporary life and ideas, he may have felt that this same society had an unpaid debt towards him.[8]

Duclos believed that it was only just for him to cede his place to those of more lasting fame.

> "Les hommes de talens doivent avoir plus de célébrité, c'est leur récompense. Les gens d'esprit doivent trouver plus d'agrement dans le commerce, puisqu'ils en portent davantage ..."[9]

All facets of the author's life as a member of society were determinants in his career. Beyond le peuple, the social and financial standing of the family had an enormous influence on the budding author. The scope and breadth of his education--its very nature--depended heavily on family standing. If the writer's family could afford to give him an education beyond reading and writing his name, he generally attended a Catholic school--a Jesuit one if he were fortunate. There he received a sound classical education where Greek and especially Latin were placed in the primary position. The mother tongue was neglected. With this instruction in mind, it would be natural to expect the boy to have a penchant for intellectual pursuits, and perhaps to influence the other boys of his family towards a clerical or intellectual career.[10] If the family were well placed socially, at court or with other prominent families, once the writer began to produce, he had a better chance of reaching the public for several reasons: the lesser nobility wanted to read what the greater nobility read; and if the appropriate word were spoken to the right person, the author could avoid most censorship problems, at least initially. These conditions (the social and financial position of the

family, education, and religion) also had considerable sway upon the size of his book market.[11]

The writer who reached maturity before 1750 often had family difficulties vis-à-vis his career. These authors mostly came from modest or less than modest backgrounds which provided little or no material aid in their artistic behalf. On the other hand, if the family was in a position to offer assistance, it usually refused from the first moment that interest in a literary career was shown. If the youth stubbornly persisted, he might expect immediate severance from all family ties for his choice in vocation.[12]

In addition to family problems, the author suffered other material woes. His writing conditions were far from desirable. His desk, chair, and lighting were medieval at best, certainly not designed for comfort. Depending upon the size of his room, the heating facilities were often grossly insufficient.[13] Once at work, he was lucky if street noises, vendors' cries, animal sounds, and numerous church bells pealing did not disturb his meditation. When he wrote, it was on thick, bulky paper, with a swan, goose, or raven quill pen and inferior ink resembling muddied water. A substitute for quills and ink was lead pencils, with bread as erasers.[14] Worthy of a study in itself is the problem of the inadequacy of reference materials. Access to these cumbersome folios could often depend on personal acquisition or the proper contacts, once the source was located. The era of the Encyclopédie saw great strides in printing techniques,

but possession of large numbers of texts was still reserved for the wealthy. These were not ideal conditions in which a dedicated man would want to spend many hours hard at work, such as did Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741) who for nearly half a century spent thirteen to fourteen hours each day at his task.[15]

It is interesting to note what a contemporary considered necessary criteria for the professional homme de lettres. First he must be judged by a seasoned scholar. Then,

> "...il approfondira, il comparera, il ne comptera ni les heures, ni les jours pour découvrir ce qui peut contribuer à la perfection de son ouvrage."[16]

His three critics were: the author himself, the journalists and other critics, and finally the public. The dedication to his profession is hardly less than that of a religious:

> "...il doit procurer à son esprit la liberté, à se choisir une situation telle que ce qu'il doit à son corps n'altère jamais son ame. Le célibat est l'état qui lui convient le mieux. Les muses, toutes vierges qu'elles sont, ne sont pas exempte /sic/ de la jalousie."[17]

Celibacy had another advantage too: there was only one mouth to feed.

The situation was not radically different from the time of Ronsard. This poet earned not a cent from the publication of his works, but lived en grand seigneur from numerous pensions, a curate, two abbeys, several priories, and handsome gifts like the diamonds from Elizabeth of England, the silver buffet worth 45000 francs from Mary Stuart.[18] If an author did not have a name which drew esteem such as Ronsard, and

if his works, although of value, did not merit a first place ranking, he still had a chance to continue his chosen profession provided he could attract funds from other sources. The author who acquired wealth from inheritance or through his own efforts (not including writing),[19] was as fortunate as he who received a lucrative position in the Church, especially given the concentration of the nation's wealth in the first estate. Besides acquired wealth and church benefices, the scholar could, like Marot and so many others, attempt to gain favor with people of high standing and full purses who would act as patrons. Less whimsical and steadier were totally unrelated jobs which brought in a salary: soldiers, doctors, pharmacists, actors, painters, engineers, watchmakers (Beaumarchais). Closer to his true calling were vocations like proofreading, publishing, printing,[20] or journalism (Fréron). Many preferred law or teaching, which included private tutoring, even in subjects about which one knew nothing (Rousseau).[21]

A steady salary as a teacher could be a comfort, but not an especially well-paying one. Having just received his licence from the Sorbonne in 1752, l'abbé de Morellet recounts in his Mémoires the problem of locating a position. There was absolutely no help from his family. To continue finding shelter under the Sorbonne's roof, Morellet would have had to go on for "le bonnet de docteur", with fees from 700 to 800 francs that he certainly could not afford. He could have taught philosophy at one of the colléges which the Sorbonne

habitually provided with teachers, but nothing was available.

> "Me faire prêtre de paroisse, était un parti auquel il m'était impossible de me résoudre. Je ne me croyais pas en état de vivre au métier d'homme de lettres. Enfin je me voyais, littéralement, à la veille de manquer de toute resource."[22]

In such a state of abandonment, an author frequently went about with holes in his shoes and stockings, in ragged clothing, and unkempt hair and body.[23]

If he could not live from his writings, he could use his pen for someone else's words, as a scribe or copyist. Or he could resort to writing pornography, published abroad, to earn a sou. Still selling his pen he could frequently find lazy preachers to provide with sermons.[24] Small wonder that priests were frowned upon as deists or libertines as they read from the pulpit. Just as the preacher found it convenient to have his work done for him, the governmental official began to realize the value of the man whom he had formerly scorned. Whereas they still preferred to keep the <u>literatus</u> out of active decision making, the leaders of the state were willing to have their own ideas expressed in an artistic fashion.

> "En outre, plus d'un ministre, comprenant qu'il fallait compter de plus en plus avec l'opinion publique, remarquant que les écrivains passaient de plus en plus pour en être les représentants et même les guides, se dit qu'il pouvait être profitable de se servir d'eux."[25]

Sometimes the author could take credit for his work; just as often, he did not have the privilege of signing his name.[26] He usually received some form of payment.

Publishing his work also posed problems for the author. He has put the finishing touches on his hand-penned manuscript which he then takes to the publisher, a powerful and ruthless man, even with authors who had already established a name for themselves. The publisher as a businessman realizes that a book will sell well only if it is in a genre which the public is interested in reading. He never knows if a book will succeed. It is to his advantage to treat all authors as though theirs is assuredly not the one which will reap a handsome return.[27]

> "Le gain que procure les oeuvres de l'esprit ne dépend, ni de leurs qualités propres, ni du rang qu'elles occupent, ni de l'influence qu'elles possèdent, ni des services qu'elles rendent, mais seulement du nombre de leurs amateurs."[28]

By dint of his name and previous successes, a famous writer might gamble on continued public favor, and bargain with the publisher for a percentage of his profits. The poorer, lesser known man cannot afford to wait emptyhanded for the future to reward or punish him. Therefore he must sell his work outright when he brings it to be published, and while he settles on format and other conditions, he also agrees on a price and signs a sealed document stating these details and the fact that he relinquishes all rights to whatever returns the publication might yield.[29]

This kind of contract, which Voltaire did not need to sign, certainly did not bother his relationships with his publishers, as he lived from investments which he made at his bourse-like Ferney, from <u>rentes foncières</u> with

quite a few famous French nobles,[30] and from diverse enterprises which he brilliantly directed. Voltaire preferred to give away his books to his editors, to his friends, or to make publishing exchanges of the rights to his book in return for a certain number of specially bound or decorated author's copies, which he then distributed to helpful or potentially helpful acquaintances. He kept nothing for himself.[31]

Rousseau and Diderot were among the exceptions (and exceptional) as authors who eventually fully supported themselves by their literary fruits. Diderot states that his entire career probably brought in 40,000 écus (which Jacques Proust, one of his recent editors, equates to 120,000 francs or some 6,000 francs per year: a meager sum for a man of letters in Paris in 1763.)[32] This amount was very unevenly dispersed, since the Encyclopédie was the one large source earning Diderot approximately 15,000 francs in five years. Buffon, however, received 15,750 francs for each volume of his Histoire naturelle. Rousseau's cunning with his publishers brought him unequal amounts on his various works. Here is a good example of the differences in contemporary public taste and posterity's judgment: le Divin du Village, 11,925 F.; le Dictionnaire de musique, 10,400 F. at once, or 5,400 F. paid immediately plus a pension viagère of 660 F. for the duration of his life (which he accepted, and which lasted twelve years); Emile, 7,000 F.; la Nouvelle Héloïse, 4,360 F.; and le Contrat social, 1,200 F.[33]

Such financial records are harder to locate for the second and third rate writer. One can assume that, since his reputation was less brilliant, he opted for a lump sum and turned over the rights to the publisher. It is also likely that if his chef-d'oeuvre was recognized as such, and he received any one of the sum mentioned above, it did not occur regularly.

He could still maintain his aura as a literary artist if he could convince someone with an open pocketbook of his worth. Or he could flatter the purse strings until they opened. This fawning was unpleasant but expected. It was already hundreds of years old.

> "...si j'avois eu la pensée de dédier mon livre à quelqu'un, je n'aurois pas...jetté les yeux sur une personne simplement illustre pas son rang ou par sa naissance; la protection des grands donne peu d'appui dans la république des Lettres; les dédicaces de cette espèce ne peuvent être guere envisagées selon bayle, que comme une honnête mendicité."[34]

Pensions could come from royalty or from the nobility. The generosity of kings was less than might be expected, due to funds channeled elsewhere: wars, financial embarrassments. During the reign of Louis XIV, the maximum spent for pensions was the relatively modest 375,000 francs, with a mean sum of 250,000. Where actual funds ran thin, the king could add worldly goods (eg., Vaugelas received "les biens du feu Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, confisqué [sic] et acquis au roi.")[35] Louis XV was even less generous for several reasons. Firstly, he had inherited the financial woes of his great-grandfather. Secondly, being a naturally

timid person, he preferred the solitude of the hunt, or an intimate dinner among close friends, to the glittering display at the court. Though as a youth he worked assiduously at his studies, he rarely invested time in literary delights for the mere pleasure of reading. Throughout his reign he showed no interest in great works or authors. If he expressed some favor for the theater, it was undoubtedly because Madame de Pompadour enjoyed acting. There is no indication that Louis ever showed the slightest interest in knowing or passing judgment on anything else. He never persecuted the writers or the philosophes, but never protected them either. Indeed, his disdain was evident when he was shocked to learn that Frederick II had dined with Voltaire.[36]

Few of the king's leading ministers were any more absorbed than their mentor in the literary outburst. They had short terms throughout the reign and would not have had the time to give much support, even if other weighty preoccupations had not diverted them.[37]

Duclos has left a clear picture of the value of court liaisons for authors:

> "Les gens de la Cour sont ceux dont les Lettres ont le plus à se louer, & si j'avois un conseil à donner à un homme qui ne peut se faire jour que par son esprit, je lui dirois: Préférez à tout l'amitié de vos égaux; c'est la plus sûre, la plus honnête, & souvent la plus utile; ce sont les petits amis qui rendent les grands services, sans tyranniser la reconnoissance: mais si vous ne voulez que des liaisons de société, faites-les à la Cour; ce sont les plus agréables & les

> moins gênantes. Ils aiment à s'attacher un homme de mérite, dont la reconnoissance peut avoir de l'éclat."[38]

Not counting the king and ministers, the most logical stipend donors were those who still had a source for "real money" (given the frightful financial state of the nobility), namely the princes of the blood, financiers, intendants, those among the literati who could channel off some of their own profits, and foreign rulers. One could hardly forget the generosity of Frederick towards Voltaire, Maupertuis, and others whom he enticed to his self-made French court at Berlin; nor that of Catherine the Great to Diderot, Voltaire, or Bonneval. At home, Madame de Pompadour was a tremendous boon to the philosophes as a group, and was a patron to Turpin. Among the wealthy philosophers, there are Helvétius, patron of Marivaux, and Voltaire, haughty Maecenas to numerous followers and aspirants.

Cash was not the only vehicle of a patron's largesse. The endowments could take the form of lodging (a house or room as a gift, or living with the family), tutoring the children in the family, the promise of a position (governmental or clerical) whenever it might fall vacant, free printing by the royal press, or the promise to purchase a certain quantity of books, once published.[39]

The government had different methods of rewarding its favored. There were many positions to be filled by appointment, like the historiographers of France, of the navy, of royal buildings, of menus plaisirs, of the order of the

Holy Ghost. This involved performance and production. In physical contact with the royal family, there were those appointed readers to high royalty.[40] Librarians to the king's library received 2,000 francs. Any number of secretariats offered prestige as well as financial assistance.[41] Again along with prestige and very little comfort, one might receive lodging in one of the royal residences (a château, the Louvre, etc.)[42]

Grimm trenchantly depicts the cold image of an author's life with his patron.

> "Wit has been so much the fashion in Paris for some time that the smallest financier's house is filled with Academicians or with aspirants to an Academy. Nevertheless, in spite of this eagerness, the financier is no less stupid and the author no less poor. If he wants to hold onto his place, he must applaud the master's bad taste; he must think like the one and talk like the other; he must suffer the haughtiness of the first and the whims of the latter; he must gain the good will of the fawners or mess-mates of the house. In a word, he must fawn upon every one, even the most menial of servants: the porter, in order to have entrance at mealtime; the flunkeys, in order not to be left waiting at the table when he asks for something to drink; the waiting maid, because the fate of a book often depends upon the judgment she forms of it when she reads it at her mistress' toilet. Such, to tell the truth, is the condition of an author who frequents the fine houses of Paris."[43]

Another means of self-preservation was in the first estate. Not only was the Church a dumping grounds for daughters without a dowry, and sons who could not buy rank in the military or receive an education in any other way, it was also a form of patronage through the many benefices which were procured and granted for centuries. It was not unusual

to find multiple posts given to one man, which could insure financial comfort. Drawbacks such as celibacy were often overlooked. See the many parodies on priests who did not behave as one might expect for a man of the cloth.[44] Lofty positions in the church hierarchy such as bishoprics or coadjutorships were sparse, but non-administrative positions were available.[45]

The homme de lettres, then, does procure means of support. Self-support is also becoming a real possibility, and the writer enjoys the freedom which results from it. The liberty involved here concerns his personal activities as well as what he writes--less fawning, fewer books written on command, fewer encomiums. Even this newfound freedom did not significantly change the types of books written. The lessening restraint was rather a personal and psychological gain for the author. The real hindrance, censorship, lasted until the Revolution.

Diligence in censorship increased or decreased during the century according to who was at its head, who influenced the ruling powers at the moment (e.g., Madame de Pompadour), and indirectly the opinion of the Church (e.g., Fleury or the Bulle Unigenitus). Aside from the directeur de la librairie,[46] several other official groups had their say in the control of publication: the parlement (with as little success as the earlier ruling Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris); in some cases procureurs and lawyers; the police; and a board of censors, whose members

were classified and bound to their duties in 1740 by categories and genres.[47] In several of these bodies, the control was only indirect. Although the Church could not say yes or no to the government's decisions, the Index Librorum Prohibitorum spoke for itself and did finally sway opinions.[48] Even after a book was printed and had received permission, it could continue to be plagued by parlement or the clergy, menaced by threats of prosecution. This could eventually chase the publication underground,[49] which did not impede its success at all. There was nothing like a bit of scandal to advertise for the colporteurs.

The basic rules for censorship were set forth in a law passed by the king's council of state in 1704.[50] In brief, it required all authors, booksellers, or printers to submit eight copies[51] of their publication, and to request letters of privilege or permission and the Great Seal of the censor. In 1725, maps and engravings were included in the required copy for examination.[52] At this stage the author's and publisher's problems were temporarily in a void, while the censor's difficulties had just begun. He was theoretically responsible for every word written, which included the multifarious ruses of writers who had well-studied techniques for disguising what was most likely counter to what the censor allowed. Once the censor had studied the work, the next decision was of great importance to his career and his well-being. If the book received permission, he had to decide which, if a hierarchy of various permissions he would choose. There was permission publique, or permission tacite,

or permission clandestine (simple tolérance).[53] If the book did not receive permission, the examiner might still have to answer to someone more powerful than he, who pressured his decision because of friendship or relationship with the author.

Robert Estivals has charted a yearly statistical study between 1747 and 1788, of exactly how many works requested permission, and of that number, how many received it or were denied.[54] One can immediately draw a number of conclusions from this very informative chart. There is a noticeable and steady increase in requests demanded, which suggests that author output was favored by technical advances, by increase in the number of writers, and by growing freedom from restraint in production. The same favorable conditions and weakening of authority are visible with each change in director. The permission tacite begins under Saint-Germain, and there is a distinct drop in the percentage of books denied permission. Moreau has made a compact and fitting generalization which could have applied to the same study:

> "Ainsi nos lois, plus nombreuses vers 1777 et surtout en vers 1783, presque plus rien ne s'oppose, pratiquement à la diffusion de l'esprit nouveau. Il n'y a plus de lutte véritable entre la force brutale and l'autorité et les idées. La bataille se livre entre des opinions, traditions d'un côté, les scepticismes, négations and révoltes de l'autre."[55]

To say that a work did not receive permission for printing was not to say that it was condemned--that was another matter entirely. A dry listing of numbers to show precisely how many titres were in this category is impossible

due to lack of records and to the diffuse branches of power which could call for laceration and burning. Bachmann lists over a thousand between 1715-1750,[56] while Rocquain shows around 800 from 1715 until the Revolution. His figures, however, are incomplete in that he has compiled only those condemned by the Conseil d'Etat, the Parlement, the Châtelet, and the Grand Conseil,[57] with no mention of ecclesiastical, provincial, or other control. In very broad terms, censorship ever since François I aimed to protect religion, royalty and the individual, ("heresy, sedition, and personal libel exclusively").

There was an eternal market for this and all forbidden material. The present-day censorship is much more rigid than that of the eighteenth century regarding pornography,[58] which at that time became a nuisance to the State only when it involved a scarcely disguised and sensitive prominent person. Condemned books drew a splendid clientele. Darnton describes as the perfect example, Toussaint's Les Moeurs. The "arrêt du Parlement" made precious a text which was nearly untouched before its notoriety, whereas afterwards everyone asked, "Have you read Les Moeurs?" A single copy might sail through fifty hands in no time at all. "Le goût de la curiosité redouble toujours pour les choses défendues."[59] When such effective publicity enhanced popularity and raised the selling-price of the book, it is understandable why some authors would arrange in advance for their book to be condemned.[60] They could write under

the cloak of anonymity to avoid legal problems, and when an obvious tic in style betrayed the true creator, he could always deny it adamantly. Many times Voltaire put more effort into denial than he put into the composition. He would deny long enough and loud enough until finally people believed (or feigned to believe) that it was so.'[1] The nobility and the clergy were always the first to scoop up the forbidden fruit.'[2]

Besides publication under an assumed name, or no name at all, there were endless tricks to evade strict censorship limitations. One could forge the place of publication, switch or invent names of publishers, or have the work printed abroad and smuggled into the country,'[3] delectable pieces for the <u>colporteur</u> who sold them privately, <u>sous le manteau</u>. It was prudent to seek out a friendly censor, or wait until approval and then add an introduction, dedication, or appendix. Arguments used by booksellers and publishers to encourage evasion were convincing and efficacious: even a sealed permission could not guarantee safety from later condemnation. Censors were rarely respected as judges, even in their own fields of specialty.'[4]

Ignoring censorship regulations was a serious affair which carried with it severe punishment for author, publisher, seller, censor, and anyone else who might be tangentially involved. Yet offenders were getting bolder, taking more liberties. A man can afford to be bold when enough important people stand behind him. This support was quite strong indeed, and by dint of its composition, it was in large

measure a major cause of the weakening structure which royal authority represented. Public opinion, the salons, the Académie Française and the provincial academies, formed a synthesis of magistrates and leaders in every field well founded in the tradition which the philosophes were in the process of attacking. It was they, the "défenseurs de la tradition", who strengthened the philosophes. It was soon elegant to scoff at the prejudices, superstition, and fanaticism all around them.

> "Très vite même on est convaincu qu'il n'y a pas de dignité humaine sans la liberté de pensée, ni d'ordre social sans tolérance. C'est ainsi que les magistrats eux-mêmes se font des complices des philosophes contre l'autorité qu'ils représentent."[16]

With his army of supporters the philosophe was willing to risk confiscation of "biens et corps". The latter could involve imprisonment,[17] the galleys, the pillory, even death.[17] Less harmful physically, were destruction of books, printing equipment, suspension of permission or rights to deal with the public. Burning books was a common penalty.[18]

Exile was less frequently used than prison as a punishment. When the latter was impending, the writer often imposed the former on himself (e.g., Coyer). Voltaire, Morellet, and many others had tasted both. But it is a fact that the well known writer was much less inconvenienced by his incarceration than the one of fleeting fame. Pellisson describes what Morellet ate at one such stay in prison: his dinner (at midday) consisted of bread, a soup, beef, an

entrée, and a dessert. In the evening he had a roast and a salad.[69] In the same situation, Fréron received every possible comfort including heat, books, visitors, and amusement.[70] For every author who disobeyed censorship rules and was punished, there were countless others who were never even approached about what they wrote, either because they successfully manoeuvred their evasive ruses, or their topics were of such a questionable nature and category that they slipped by unnoticed.

Precisely what such categories were is difficult to discern due to the incompleteness of records. Statistical studies of this type are lacking. It appears, not as yet, as one has done anything of that nature which would yield positive results. From the peripheral studies,[71] however, one can get a good idea of what was written during the entire century, and of the variabilities in popularity from one year to another. These changes are important in the study of the minor writer especially, since his rise and fall are determined by the masters, and since one, in turn, determines what will show the interests of his epoch. The Diderots and the Jean-Jacques are personalities for posterity, while the abbé Joyers and the Fréron de Montbron dist rically, intellectually, and literarily mirror our their society.

The most notable change is the unsurprising decline of interest in orthodox religion and theology and the rise in subjects purely deistic.[72] Despite the slight decline in permission for belles lettres, it is worthwhile to note that at the same time, they still represented an equal

percentage of interest with the eighteenth century king, science, which together with *belles lettres* composes nearly eighty per cent of the tacit permissions and up to sixty per cent of public permissions. While *belles lettres* changed little as a group, there were interior transmogrifications. According to Mornet, poetry, drama and the classics gave way[23] to prose, the development of new genres (e.g., art and music criticism, the philosophical tale) and heightened interest in areas which formerly were relatively unknown (e.g., exotic voyages and other travel literature). By all indications, science was at its most powerful between 1760-1784, and yet the *Journal des Savants* shows a decline in its reviews and in space occupied during this period. This is explicable when one realizes the changes taking place within the Journal, i.e. more interest in science *per se*, but less interest in the specialized ones, which were handled in a raft of newly forming, strictly scientific journals. That the rise in science was not as sharp as one might expect at this epoch is not hard to understand given the theory that it was not the flame of interest, kindled at the beginning of the century, which was dying out; rather, it was that general public interest was more on the increase than the production of "gens informés".[24] Mornet's literary study makes the striking discovery that in twenty-three out of five hundred libraries, the natural sciences (insects and animals, silk manufacture, grain production and trade) occupied one fifth of each total.

Ehrard and Roger attribute the increase of historical output to inspiration by contemporary events.[25] The whole nature of history methodology was changing from the near fictitious quality at the opening of the century, to a more erudite, better documented presentation of facts. These pictures (not one victim of one party close to their own had a way of underlining the weaknesses of the contemporary scene, (viz., Le Siècle de Louis XIV, Histoire des mœurs, l'Histoire de Sobieski).

Works on law were relatively unimportant and did not essentially change during the century.

In reviewing what the art to write, we would quite naturally tend to view all works with a "pair-o-pelical" bent, since the philosophers wrote the most remembered works; but

> "chacun sait qu'on n'a pas le droit d'en conclure que l'opinion moyenne, tout au long du XVIIIe siècle, n'a s'occupée que de 'philosophie'."

To discover what did interest "l'opinion moyenne", it is necessary to review the general categories of texts, such as (in Ehrard, Roger, Mornet, Martin and Hettinger), and then take into consideration the breakdown of general classifications and watch the reactions of constituents of this society.

> "Le livre en effet est un objet seul; une fois écrit, imprimé, relié, il se suffit à lui-même. C'est par un effort d'intégration que nous le retrouvons moyen de communication entre un auteur et un groupe social plus ou moins abstrait que l'on nomme son public....Qu'il soit écrit pour plaire, pour 'éclairer' pour témoigner ou pour convaincre, le livre se présente comme un

> tout. C'est l'intention avouée ou implicite; mais en réalité il est partie. Partie d'un 'genre', d'une speculation, d'un mode d'expression collective, de modes aussi. Nous l'enracinons en l'humain quand par l'analyse de sa matière, la discrimination de ses règles, de ses limites ou de ses mécanismes, les déterminations de l'influence, nous le rétablissons dans son genre ou nous retrouvons la démarche par quoi il est fait langage: ici 'littérature' et histoire cheminent de concert pour l'approche et le sauvegard du singulier."[77]

Using contemporary judgment as a standard of measure, the most read books were often not the same ones which one considers noteworthy today.

To see why public opinion did not always choose what today remains as the eighteenth century classics, it is necessary to take a closer look at who was doing the reading. Carraccioli gave a grim report as to how many people were capable of reading, and an even sadder account of the quality of the books read. If there were 600,000 who could read, he said, less than one-twelfth of them chose good books. Most people read whatever "tombe sous leur main", and the rest were only interested in dangerous books. Their sole guide for quality or interest was the name of the author,[78] an unfortunate fact for the minor author. Voltaire is still more pessimistic and precise. He counts forty or fifty readers per week if the book is serious, 400 to 500, if it is "plaisant", and [illegible] if it is a play.[79]

A specific example regarding public taste and ultimate durability and value is the Williams by Mailhet, which was much more widely read than Voltaire's Éléments de la

philosophie de Newton; or in the natural sciences, which spurred great interest, the Dutch author Goedart's l'Histoire des insectes was found in 50 out of the 500 libraries that Mornet studied, which was much more popular than Lettre sur les spectacles.[30]

It is interesting to note that none of the above mentioned literature had anything at all to do with le peuple. Although "philosophy" left traces of philanthropy, developing sensitivity, and a few vocabulary words on the bourgeoisie and nobility, its overall effect on the peasant class was negligible. The literature of the moralists had a more visceral appeal, since the intellect was made. Aside from the Almanac which contained a little bit of everything, the main literary interests of the masses involved religion: either joy, or death.[31]

Putting the lower classes aside altogether, since the author for the greater reading public came from and appealed to a more refined level of society, one can see that the most profitable kinds of books written, the most popular, and the ones which were rarely outstanding, were those directed to the crowd;

> "...parce que le nombre des gens qui pensent ayant augmenté infiniment moins que le nombre de gens qui lisent, il a fallu faire, pour les besoins énormes de ces derniers, une quantité d'écritures que l'on puisse lire sans penser."[32]

In some ways this was yet another limitation for the writer of lesser quality, since his audience was not in a position to choose. In others, it was no restriction at all, because

he was most adept at the imitation of Buffon or Montesquieu or another whose name had a train of admirers from which he could profit, as far as style and ideas. What Caraccioli's twelve per cent who chose "good books" might call trivial, un-thought provoking, and repetitious, was often witty, enjoyable, clever, even original to the other eighty-eight per cent.

An examination of all imitations will indicate [illegible] the style of the writer who had to rely on more than ingenuity to maintain a respectable position in the literary world. When the author wrote to please the public, [illegible], similar diversion pleased him as well. If he were no more than a mediocre talent, he may have [illegible].

[illegible] gift, and [illegible] perpet-[illegible], this momentary [illegible] permanent [illegible] more writing, because the public [illegible] quickly [illegible] the writer [illegible] imitation [illegible] him any further possibilities.

The same immobility might fall upon the writer who [illegible] style after an already well-established author. [illegible] would a writer [illegible] of the travelers to Paris who corresponded with their

friends or family at home and recounted the customs of the French world (eg., Lettres chinoises, or Lettres jaunes[22])? Although censorship aimed at controlling the amount and kind of criticism which the genre of creations such as the Lettres jaunes or Lettres chinoises might direct against the government or important personages, censorship itself indirectly influenced this style. The techniques which the author successfully used helped him to avoid constraint or punishment.

The power and influence of the patron was as personal as the amount of financial or other assistance he provided. It is certain that when the patron expected a family or monastical library, for example, [illegible] the artist wanted to [illegible] patronage, [illegible] a little [illegible], verbal manipulations and panegyric were necessary.

One must admit the influence of the academic formation of the [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] literarily. [illegible] is naturally the most plausible of the writer's influences. A [illegible] in classical literature opens the way to [illegible], [illegible]. Law studies, medicine, theology or the military will lead themselves to specialized vocabulary and concepts from the different fields.

Also becoming increasingly specialized and more numerous were the academies, which encouraged excellence and originality of performance, elevated ideas and artistry.

But the academies were not merely an influence on the [illegible]. Many [illegible] were well-[illegible] [illegible].

and special ways of dressing. Topics of conversation and an especially rigid vocabulary were dictated by the rapidly changing mode of the day, or by strong personalities such as Madame de Fenelon or the Marquise de Lambert. Aside from the popularity and the opportunity for a tour-de-force in a new play, poem, or tale, a salon or a letter might determine a writer's entrance into a society or an academy, even the Académie Française.[24] Vocabulary and language changed. There was a return of precisiveness. Everything depended on the "style coupé" and on "esprit". All ideas became "portatives" and comprehensible for the man on the street. The truly great works were prepared to please the salon-dwellers. Fortunately only,

> "A great work now advances with rapidly strides since it can be launched with Parisian invitations to welcome dinners and fabulous suppers."

On the other hand, Montesquieu, a well known writer and respected thinker, but less notable than Montesquieu or Diderot, owes his fame and success to salon existence. In his works, he classifies his work and the influence of two salons upon his style:

> "Leurs entretiens étaient une école pour moi, non moins utile qu'agréable ; et, autant qu'il m'était possible, je profitais de leurs leçons. Celui qui ne veut écrire qu'avec précision, énergie et vigueur, ne peut vivre qu'avec des hommes;mais celui qui veut, dans son style, avoir de la souplesse, de l'aménité, du liant, et ce je ne sais quoi qu'on appelle la grâce, fera très bien, je crois, de vivre avec des femmes."[25]

The majority of the writers **who** remain great today profited from solitude, the company of men, and the company of women. Their output was so great and so extensive that there was plenty of room for all genres, all kinds of language, and elegance and "esprit" mixed with profanity and vulgar.

As self-evident as enumeration, is the contrast expressed by choice of topic. Propriety regarding theology and orations would necessarily differ from law or history or astronomy. By this choice the authors manipulated the effects themselves, with the end result that they introduced many changes in style and methodology, (viz., history became more fictious, [illegible] and [illegible]; [illegible], a new genre, mixed [illegible] with belles lettres, e.g., Hieronymus; travel literature developed from simple reports of trips made and adventures experienced, to extraordinary voyages based on real ones, now mixed with poetry and philosophy of mind. Many variations in vocabulary, idiom, and style took place because of the growing influence of the philosophes. A transcendental influence is also important here: the world and local events which were taking place at the moment. The eighteenth century was profoundly affected by its developing history. Pure fiction, simply for amusement, was at a low ebb, while even drama was assuming a new form in the drame and the comédie larmoyante. Art and literature took a moralistic turn as the century grew older. The greatest pieces of literature were non-fiction. Without the lamentable [illegible], the [illegible] of all [illegible], the [illegible]

use and results achieved by pamphlets, the importance attached to academy prizes on national subjects. The best poetry of the century is towards the end, and distinctly nationalistic in tone. Manon Lescaut and La Nouvelle Héloïse are definitely accompanied by works showing the bad effects of luxe [illegible] imaginary tale [illegible] a perfect society with an ideal government. Evidently his own epoch did not entirely satisfy the author, or at any rate, he saw need for improvement and [illegible].

It is necessary to discover how a writer reacted to the war, [illegible], whether he was aware that the battle of the A[illegible] [illegible]. While the preceding [illegible] with the [illegible], the [illegible] was definitely [illegible] from a [illegible].

> "[illegible], [illegible], [illegible], n'habiter que l[illegible] âme et ne cultiver que la superficie de son esprit, s'exprimer heureusement, avoir un tour d'imagination agréable, une conversation légère et délicate, et savoir plaire sans savoir se faire estimer, être né avec le talent équivoque d'une conception prompte, et se croire par là au-dessus de

> la réflexion, voler d'objets en objets sans en approfondir aucun, cueillir rapidement toutes les fleurs et ne donner jamais aux fruits le temps de parvenir à leur maturité: c'est une faible peinture de ce qu'il plaît à notre siècle d'honorer du nom d'esprit."[29]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

not win him lasting fame. Some tried to succeed through their impressive contracts. Some continued to change their products to meet the desires of the day. Some retreated into teaching Latin, Greek or mathematics to a nobleman's son. [illegible] their material, their [illegible] was considerable and worth anyhow. Often they received a [illegible] of salary, equal to the one which originally placed them in the public eye.

The [illegible] and their possibilities was determined by individual personality, by the amount of talent at the author's command, by the [illegible] power, influence and [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], and by [illegible].

To put flesh and blood upon the [illegible] generalization [illegible] brings to life the [illegible] [illegible] which have appeared [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] by [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] exemplify the problems of the preceding [illegible].

NOTE TO REFERENCES

Throughout the dissertation in all cases I have maintained the spelling and accentuation as they appeared in the original texts.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

[illegible], Vouaux, *Les Philosophes et la société française au XVIIIe siècle* (Lyon: A. Rey, 1[illegible]), p. [illegible].

[illegible]nclos, *Considérations sur les moeurs de ce siècle* (1[illegible]), p. [illegible], (hereafter referred to as *Considérations*).

[illegible]See Robert Naudet's excellent and exhaustive *L'Idée du bonheur au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Colin, 1[illegible]), for every aspect of the notion of happiness.

[illegible]nclos, *Considérations*, pp. [illegible].

[illegible]Jean Ehrard and Jacques Roger, "Les périodiques français du XVIIIe siècle: Un journal des lumières et des témoins du réveil," *Lumières et société dans la France du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Mouton & Cie, 1[illegible]), p. [illegible].

[illegible]Daniel Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles de la révolution française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1[illegible]), p. [illegible], (hereafter referred to as *Origines*).

[illegible]Georges Matthieu, "Un ami de la philosophie: l'Abbé Boyer (1[illegible]-1[illegible]), sa vie et ses oeuvres," (unpublished doctoral thesis, Toulouse, 1[illegible]), p. [illegible].

L'Année littéraire, cited in Mornet, *Origines*, p. [illegible]. "Un plus mince opuscule peut en son temps philosophe, [illegible] le magistrat, ou pour mieux dire, le fait au jour."

[illegible]nclos, *Considérations*, p. [illegible].

[illegible]Gaston [illegible], *Les Essais sur la [illegible] de l'ancien régime* (Clermont-Ferrand, Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, 1[illegible]), p. [illegible].

[illegible]*Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[12]Maurice Pellisson, Les Hommes de Lettres au XVIIIe siècle (Paris: Colin, 1911), pp. 163-164. The supreme example of family disfavor is undoubtedly Diderot, whose father was rather well off financially, and of reasonably liberal thought, yet he refused his son any assistance.

[13]Few authors were as imaginative as Pascal about whom there is an apocryphal anecdote in which he managed to keep adequately warm an entire winter with only one log for his fireplace. He would toss the log out of his window, run down several flights of stairs to fetch it, then run upstairs and do the same thing over and over again.

[14]Although André Dalesme invented the metal pen point during the eighteenth century, it never replaced the quill to any extent. Rubber was not used as an eraser until Louis XVI. Pottinger, The French Book Trade, p. [illegible].

[15]Ibid., pp. [illegible].

[16]Coyecque, Recueil de l'Admission (Paris: Droz, 1929), pp. [illegible].

[17]Ibid., p. [illegible].

[18]Georges d'Avenel, Les Revenus d'un intellectuel (Paris: Brouin, [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[19]For example: Marmontel, Taylor, Beaumarchais, Bernardin, d'Holbach, Le Sage, Mirabeau, Morellet, Necker, Savary de Brèves, Voltaire. Pottinger, The French Book Trade, p. [illegible].

[20]Again a printer did not necessarily forsake his writing career, to name just one exception, Diderot was printer and a quill member fulfilling specific requirements before he could publish his own works. Ibid., p. [illegible].

[21]Ibid., pp. [illegible], [illegible].

[22]Morellet, Mémoires inédits (Paris: Levavasseur, [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[23]Pellisson, Les Hommes de Lettres, p. [illegible].

[24]Ibid., pp. [illegible], [illegible].

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 142, (*viz.*, Mably for le Cardinal de Tencin, Coyer for l'Averdy or maybe Turgot, Morellet for Choiseul, Trudaine, Turgot and d'Invaux, and others.)

[30] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[31] L. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris* (Amsterdam: [illegible]), II, [illegible].

[32] d'Avenel, *Histoire*, II. [illegible].

[33] [illegible], cited in Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, p. [illegible].

[34] [illegible], the prince de [illegible], the comte d'[illegible] [illegible]. d'Avenel, *Histoire*, p. [illegible].

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. [illegible].

[36] [illegible], *Lettre* [illegible], [illegible] ([illegible]), p. [illegible].

[37] d'Avenel, *Histoire*, pp. [illegible]; and Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, p. [illegible]. [illegible] ... following [illegible] of fifteen [illegible] between silver and gold, [illegible] translating these "[illegible]" [illegible] to their purchasing power in his pre-World War I epoch (1914). *Ibid.*, [illegible] ... the currency stood in relation [illegible] ... Twenty [illegible] ... thirty-five under Louis XV, and later thirty-six livres. The [illegible] (first [illegible] under Louis XIII), was called [illegible], and was worth three livres or sixty sols, finally devaluated to five [illegible]. *The French Book Trade*, p. [illegible].

[38] [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible].

[32] d'Avenel, Revenus, p. [illegible].

[33] Pellisson, Les Hommes de Lettres, pp. [illegible], [illegible].

[34] Ibid., p. [illegible]. Fleury was a slight exception because [illegible] attachments. After [illegible] Fleury, Maurepas was interested in [illegible], Trudaine and [illegible] were [illegible], [illegible] [illegible].

[35] Doolen, Considérations, pp. [illegible].

[36] Pellisson, The French Book Trade, pp. [illegible].

[37] Chevrier to Marie Antoinette, [illegible], Correspondance, [illegible] the [illegible] d'Orléans. [illegible], Les Hommes de Lettres, pp. [illegible].

[38] [illegible] (Paris: [illegible]), [illegible] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[39] Ibid.

[40] [illegible], Les Hommes de Lettres, pp. [illegible].

[41] Bn., d'Ar[illegible], [illegible] pour servir à l'histoire de F. Pierre, [illegible] (La Haye: [illegible]).

[42] Pellisson, The French Book Trade, pp. [illegible].

[43] [illegible] began in [illegible] and lasted until [illegible]. Until the eighteenth century the chief was the chancellor, whose title been changed to director of the libraries. At mid-century, the task became too great for one man. When Malesherbes became director, the police became increasingly involved. For the most part, the list of chief censors is an impressive one: the abbé Pigron (1715-1721), Fleurian d'Armenonville (1722-1725), Chauvelin fils (1727-1736), Rouillé (1737), the Comte d'Argenson (1737-1750), Tulou (1750-1750), Lamoignon de Malesherbes (1750-1763), Saint-[illegible] (1763-1768), Ameil (1768-1769), Le Tonnelier de Breteuil (1769-1773), Lamoignon de Villeneuve (1773-1775), [illegible] (1775-1776). [illegible], La Stratification bibliographique de la France sous l'Ancien Régime (XVIII[illegible]

siècle (Paris: Mouton et Cie, 1965), p. 47, (hereafter referred to as Statistique); and Augustin Martin Lottin, Catalogue chronologique des libraires et libraires-imprimeurs de Paris (Paris: 1789), cited in Pottinger, The French Book Trade, p. 66.

[47] Estivals, Statistique, p. [illegible]; Pottinger, The French Book Trade, pp. [illegible]; Albert Bachman, Censorship in France from 1715 to 1789, Voltaire's Contemporaries (New York: Columbia University Press, [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[48] Léon Gabaldon, La Censure (Paris: A. Pedone, [illegible]), pp. [illegible].

[49] François Furet, "La 'librairie' du royaume de France au XVIIIe siècle," Livre et société, ed. A. Cupront (Paris: [illegible], [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[50] [illegible] Bibliothèque Nationale, [illegible] fr. [illegible]; [illegible] Archives Nationales, AD[illegible], MSS fr. [illegible]-MSS fr. [illegible] ([illegible]); [illegible] Robert Estivals, [illegible] Objet [illegible] Bibliographie de la France [illegible] (Paris: [illegible], [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[51] [illegible] the [illegible] in [illegible] Bibliothèque [illegible], [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible], [illegible] the Bibliothèque [illegible] Chancellor, [illegible] "[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]", ibid.

[52] [illegible], MSS fr. [illegible], [illegible]; [illegible] ibid., [illegible].

[illegible] was the [illegible] approval which [illegible] the [illegible], and was printed [illegible] the [illegible]; it did not guarantee the author from persecution, but was [illegible] to eliminate. [illegible] was an intermediary [illegible] which absolved the director of full responsibility for the book's publication, and somewhat protected [illegible]. Used for works which were not [illegible] [illegible], but not [illegible] enough to [illegible] the [illegible], this unofficially permitted its issuance, and was registered in the offices of the chancellor, the lieutenant of police, and the guild, but did not name the censor. Clandestine permission stretched the already semi-legal grant to print, to the point of openly undermining the authority of the King and the government. It was a verbal accord from the lieutenant of police which [illegible] the publisher that he would ignore a [illegible] publication, [illegible]

least issue a warning before a raid was made on the shop. Estivals, Statistique, pp. 36, 43; Pottinger, The French Book Trade, p. 67. According to Pellisson, between 1772-177[illegible], of the 2,062 requests on register for tacit permission, between 3/4 to 4/5 were granted. Ibid. Estivals has classified the prohibited books between 1780-1787: about 1/4 of actual production did not receive permission requested. From 2-4% of actual production were prohibited, printed any- [illegible]. [illegible] Statistique, p. [illegible].

[illegible] Following [illegible] study by five-year intervals. The same conclusions can be drawn from the [illegible]:

YEAR	REQUESTS	GRANTED	REFUSED	TACIT	DIRECTOR
1747	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		
[illegible]	[illegible]	290	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		
[illegible]	309	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	

[illegible], p. [illegible].

[illegible], [illegible] [illegible] (Paris: Armand [illegible]), p. [illegible].

[illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], p. [illegible].

[illegible] Bastille [illegible] Louis XV [illegible] Louis XVI [illegible] L'Esprit [illegible]

[illegible] Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, pp. [illegible], [illegible]; Estivals, *Statistique*, p. 57.

[illegible] E. J. F. Barbier, *Journal*, III, [illegible]; [illegible] in Bachman, *Censorship*, p. [illegible].

[illegible] Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, p. [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible] Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, p. [illegible].

[illegible] Bachman, *Censorship*, p. [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Pottinger, *The French Book Trade*, pp. [illegible].

[illegible] F. Ravaisson, *Archives de la Bastille*, XII, [illegible], "Lettre de Voltaire à Marville, [illegible] 1744," [illegible] Bachman, *Censorship*, pp. [illegible].

[70]Berryer to M. Chevalier, major of the Bastille, Paris, 24 janvier 1757: "Lorsque vous recevrez au chateau de la Bastille, monsieur, le sieur Fréron, qui y sera conduit de l'ordre du Roy par le sieur d'Hémery, inspecteur de police, vous luy donnerez un des deux appartemens à feu, la prometre, des livres, et de quoy écrire pour s'amuser dans sa chambre. Vous luy permettrez d'entendre la messe, s'il le veut; en un mot, vous luy procurerez tous les adoucissemens que l'on peut apporter à un pareil malheureux, comme je le prétends, et à ses dépens. S'il profite de l'indulgence que je vous dis avoir pour luy." Cited in F. J. L'Ost, Histoire de la détention des philosophes et des gens de lettres à la Bastille et à Vincennes (Paris: F. Didot, 1762), II, 192.

[71]In the appendix I have presented several graphs and charts from which I have made generalizations. Each study is extremely limited by kind of its source, but presented together, they confirm each other's results from different angles. The Furet graphs concern permissions publiques and permission tacite, with nothing on those not receiving permission. Estimates must cover all types, but in figures only, with no categorization. Ehrard and Roger report the reality public through their graphs on two journals, but the two which they consider the most reliable and representative. Pottinger's chart, lives numbers of new titles, and includes classification as well, but represents only 200 writers whom this author chose himself, therefore confining his results to the personalities of his sample sampling. All the above statistical studies cannot reveal the Darnton's monumental study of private libraries, but are cumulatively useful between 1700-1789; Daniel Roche, "Les Enseignements des bibliothèques privées (1750-1789)," Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1969), XVII, 449-462, (hereafter referred to as Enseignements).

[72]Note that Bayle's dictionary occupies the primary place in the case of dernier's sex literature. Enseignements, cited in Pottinger, The French book trade, p. 33. Christianity and Bayle were discussed here in the light of Le Clerc and especially tolerance. Darnton, Origines, p. 10.

[73]Darnton, Origines, p. 5.

[74]Ehrard and Roger, "Deux périodiques...", p. 3.

[75]Ibid., p. 5.

[76]Ibid., pp. 5-7.

[77] Alphonse Dupront, "Livre et culture dans la société française du XVIIIè siècle: Réflexions sur une enquête," in Dupront, ed., *Livre et société*, p. 191.

[78] L. A. de Caraccioli, *Lettres récréatives et morales sur les moeurs du temps* (Paris and Lyon: 1767), I, [illegible].

[79] d'A[illegible], *[illegible]*, p. [illegible].

[80] Mornet, *Enseignements*, p. [illegible].

[81] Geneviève Bollème, "Littérature populaire et littérature de colportage au XVIIIè siècle," Dupront, ed. *Livre et société*, II, 77, [illegible]. The Christmas story was acted out or read in [illegible] *drama* which evoked not the adoration and meditation of the intangible mysteries, but rather resulted in physical and empathetic identification in terms of background, suffering, cold, hunger, and persecution of the holy family; [illegible]

[82] d'A[illegible], *[illegible]*, p. [illegible].

[83] d'Ar[illegible], *[illegible]* (La Haye: [illegible] Pierre Paupie, [illegible]); d'A[illegible], *[illegible]* [illegible]

[84] [illegible]

[85] [illegible] (London: [illegible]), p. 1[illegible].

[86] [illegible]

[illegible] "Especially helpful and complete on language changes and terminology (and other) [illegible] see F. Brunot, *Les Transformations de la langue française pendant la deuxième moitié du XVIII[illegible] siècle (1760-1789)* (Paris: Belin Frères, 1903). Very useful for ideas [illegible], Benjamin Morrey's *Pensées*, see his "La Vie [illegible]. Le Salon," *La Vie parisienne au XVIII[illegible] siècle* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1914).

[illegible] Geoffrey Atkinson, *Les Nouveaux Horizons de la sensibilité française et le mouvement préromantique, 1690-1740* (Paris: Librairie E. Droz; Genève: Librairie Edouard Champion, [illegible]); and G. Atkinson, *Les Relations de voyages du XVII[illegible] siècle et l'évolution des idées* (Paris: Librairie E. Droz; Genève: Librairie Edouard Champion, [illegible]).

[illegible]

[illegible] *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique, par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc.* (Paris: Librairie de Furne, [illegible]), ed. Tourneux, p. iii.

CHAPTER II

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] between [illegible]

[illegible] was a *philosopher*; [illegible] always [illegible] worthy of the title, but he was never of the magnitude [illegible] to fill [illegible] chair. Although [illegible]

a few miles away, the area where Gabriel François grew up, and which still contains valuable records regarding his life.

> "Enfin, il aperçut sur une montagne lointaine des murs noirs; c'était la citadelle de Besançon...[qui] n'est pas seulement une des plus jolies villes de France, elle abonde en gens de coeur et d'esprit. Mais Julien n'était qu'un petit paysan et n'eut aucun moyen d'approcher les hommes distingués."

Joyer was reared among these "gens d'esprit et de coeur" and attempted to [illegible] the same characteristics. Like Julien, he came from a small family and was destined to be a man of the cloth. Unlike Julien, Gabriel François' family was [illegible], [illegible] the proper [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible]. And unlike Julien, [illegible] [illegible]. He was [illegible] [illegible] people, [illegible]. Joyer [illegible] away, from the Church. His [illegible] with the [illegible], [illegible] [illegible], rather [illegible], a notion which [illegible] moral, philosophical, [illegible]. It is easy to [illegible] the man who [illegible] contributed to the improvement in Joyer's portrait, [illegible] in the réserve of the Besançon museum.

A rather plain face with ordinary features seems to betray his simple origins. Joyer's dress and background [illegible] [illegible]

of the Dukes of Bouillon where he spent his days, a handsome collection of beautifully bound volumes exhibit some of his favorite and most frequently cited authors. Neither modest in his intellectual endeavors, nor cowering in his literary [illegible]

[illegible]

into the Society of Jesus at Porrentruy in 17[illegible], at age [illegible]1. Gabriel's decision to become a Jesuit was probably some[illegible] influenced by [illegible] by well [illegible]. A [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

abbots, priests, and seminary students as well. What d'Argenson said in [illegible] had become fully confirmed: "Revealed religion is not completely [illegible] part."[1] [illegible]

[illegible]

In [illegible] Paris. [illegible] with [illegible], [illegible] saw. [illegible]

[illegible] *i.e.*, [illegible]

> "[illegible]."[2]

[illegible] 1789, and since the nature of his writing and his personality was contrary [illegible], he probably lived off [illegible] he had made during the last eleven years, in addition to what he must still be receiving from the [illegible]. It is unlikely [illegible] family [illegible]

assumption that he had made a few contacts while still with the Jesuits. There were always clubs and coffee houses where salon doors were not yet open. The abbé must have been making all possible contacts through family, friends, and acquaintances, in order to find a means of support. He had several possibilities for situations in which to be useful: abbés were regularly teachers in collèges, preceptors for young gentlemen, or writers. According to Guillive,

> "c'est un corps qui possède un fonds inépuisable de talens & de savoir, & qui le cultive sans cesse."[13]

Most contemporaries, however, had a much less agreeable opinion of abbés not actively associated with the Church.[14]

After these five years of silence, Coyer made a decision which insured his wellbeing for the rest of his life. In 1741, Gabriel François Coyer became the precentor to Godefroy-Charles-Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, the future duke of Bouillon, prince of Turenne, then the count of Evreux, colonel-general in the cavalry, then thirteen years old. The lasting friendship with this generous and liberal family insured Coyer's livelihood and provided lodging, travel and prestigeous contacts, important for an author. Coyer must have made an exceptional impression on the then reigning duc de Bouillon, as he was chosen to replace the Chevalier de Ramsey, the former tutor.[15]

The dwelling place of the dues de Bouillon for many generations, the original château de Navarre, no longer standing in Coyer's time, was built for the wife of Philippe d'Evreux, king of Navarre. The reconstructed château

was never a lovely forest. It was formed after the plans of Jules Hardouin-Mansard, with splendid gardens designed by Le Nôtre.[1] For [illegible] years large [illegible] of people [illegible] in this château.

[illegible]

[illegible]

A

same district, it follows that his father would be interested enough in the area itself for his son to keep an eye on the development of events even if the young colonel did not actively participate.

Fatigued and disgusted by the war, Coyer took a trip to the restful waters of Barèges, in the Hautes Pyrénées near Lourdes. At this point there is another confusion regarding Coyer's life. According to la veuve Duchesne, on this voyage Coyer accompanied "the two young princes, sons of the reigning Duke."[23] The Duke Charles-Godefroy had only one son (Godefroy-Charles-Henry) and one daughter (Louise-Henriette-Jean). The son, Coyer's student, had married in 1744, at age seventeen, and in 1747 was himself the father of a single child, a one year old son.[24] Although Coyer obviously could not have accompanied the Duke's two sons, and it is unlikely that he took along the duke's daughter, it is reasonable to believe that he accompanied the Duke's son, grandson and the young mother to Barèges. Military campaigns had constantly separated the newlyweds since their marriage. They would have enjoyed an opportunity to get to know each other again. It was not at all unusual for a preceptor to tag along at such a time. The prince, at nineteen, would be legally under his father's jurisdiction until around twenty-five. Until that time, the father had absolute power and control over all his children.[24] Judging by the sincere, lifelong friendship maintained by the prince for his tutor, it is also probable that he valued his

teacher's counsel and companionship. Barèges is a lovely site. Even today it is a favorite winter resort area. No one knows whether Coyer wrote any of his first feuilles volantes during this trip, but he could hardly have had a more ideal physical setting for literary inspiration.

The abbé's first publication was during this same year. He was forty years old. He had lived long enough and was observant and quick enough to have formed definite, solid ideas about what was going on around him. Although this first production, Découverte de la pierre philosophale, was a success, it was anonymous, as were most feuilles volantes, and therefore did not bring him any renown.

Beginning his literary career with feuilles volantes was both good and bad at the same time: good for immediate success; bad because the public labeled him as a frivolous salon-type moralist and refused, even in later years, to admit his talent in other areas. The genre was popular, profitable, and necessary as a means of public communication, since there were still no daily newspapers.[1] As even the safety of anonymity was further detailed by prudence in allusion and irony, the most insolent attacks against government and customs were carried in fiction. In just this way, through many pamphlets, Coyer attacked such abuses as venality of positions, the unfair rights of the useless, lazy nobility which trammeled the peuple, overwhelming taxation, and other injustices. At this particular epoch, real anger and violence on the part of the author were still rare and very covert, undoubtedly through timidity and prudence.[2]

All of [illegible]'s feuillet volantes were immediately [illegible] *le manteau* in [illegible]. They were [illegible] in 17[illegible], [illegible] [illegible], [illegible], with the [illegible].

[illegible]

Before his final paragraph, this good citizen, happy to have served his country, "renonce même à la gloire flateuse de l'invention"[28] of his episode. It was Jonathan Swift[29] who had first proposed the idea in England, where the plan did not have a felicitous end because the English lacked either "lumières" or love for the public good, two qualities which the French possessed in abundance, according to Coyer.

Découverte was Coyer's litmus with public opinion. With the end of the war of the Austrian Succession in 1748, Coyer had the time and the encouragement from his readers to publish some more frivolous volumes. A most popular, l'Année merveilleuse, was issued twice in the same year. La Vertu démontrée is quite similar to the Lettres persanes and Lettres juives. Les Bagues ou l'Astrologue du jour were probably suppressed. They were never re-edited in any form.[30] Jeanne is by a long shot the little gem of one story. Les Bagues is "toute composée d'allusions",[31] although no mention as such is made in the literature dealing with suppressed works.[32] The notoriety which resulted would naturally enhance his popularity.

It was probably around this time, when his name was batted back and forth in popular meeting places, that he began to make the acquaintance of the most famous men of letters. I will not say that he made fast friends with these well known artists. He visited Voltaire on numerous occasions, but he rarely received a kind word in the correspondence of Diderot and Grimm. Nonetheless, his name was

our Transmigration",[illegible] a humble Jewish voyager writes letters to his dear friend Ben-[illegible], to report on what he has witnessed in other lands, [illegible] Part I. What the traveller will view [illegible] will [illegible]

[illegible] writings [illegible] [illegible] the people [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the abbé Coyer in the vanguard of 1748, his inability to modify and develop was one reason why his fame scarcely lasted beyond his own century.

His pamphlet <u>Les Masques</u> disappeared from the public eye long before that. It is a short piece that begins in a harangue on the familiar theme of metamorphosis. This changes to the unmasking of the false existences that everyone led, weakened by luxury and poor moral character. Denuded of their masks, the French people are bitterly shown as lazy, pitilessly ambitious for personal gain, concupiscent, licentious. In some ways, this <u>feuille volante</u> anticipates or a sequel to <u>L'Année merveilleuse</u>.

> "Vous en voyez...dont le déréglement est mixte, dont l'esprit est ambigu; ils tiennent de l'Homme & de la Femme; ils ont l'habit : le chapeau des uns, le mantelet : le fichu des autres, le ton : la hardiesse des premiers; le grand habit & la coquetterie des seconds. Qu'on me dire si le tels personnages pouvoient ainsi se travestir, s'ils n'étoient sur [ils] s'obtenir par la vénération du Peuple, les faveurs des Belles, : les bénéfices de l'Etat."[45]

His denunciations are mordant and acerbic, and increase in their intensity. The writer seems to have gotten more and more disgusted with what he has revealed. Finally he is unable to keep his own harlequin mask which allowed him to see through all others while remaining hidden. He terminates as an author, not a character, stating that

> "nous passons toute notre vie sous le masque; ---et que nous ne portons tant les bals que des simulacres de notre vrai masque."[46]

[illegible]

[illegible]

their bread. For that reason, Foki will provide them with their own open-air theater. First he will give "les ruses de Cartouche",[68] a popular style comedy where they can shed copious tears. Then, for the "petite pièce", he will have 4,000 very tender words written on small pieces of rolled up paper, in the form of lottery tickets. He will draw out 2,000 of them by pure chance, and in the same order in which they are drawn "ce sera un Opéra dans le goût de ceux d'aujourd'hui",[69] sung to Japanese music. The people will be more fortunate than their superiors, for if Foki sees that they are yawning, he will only execute the first act.

In scene six, Meyer parodies how tax collectors and intendants can get gold out of anything (food, salt, and everyone's pocket). Then they demonstrate how gold turns the bourgeoise into the duchess, and the fool into the quick-witted.

At the Place Vendôme there will be a magnificent fireworks display formed a tiny "bonnets le docteur" in proportion to the small heads they must fit, many cats on weathervanes which swivel at the slightest breeze, and military leaders' riding crops which can never find hands to hold them. There will also be a particular sprouting of sparkling books, but

> "Il faudra être prompt au cour d'oeil car ils seront ensevelis aussi-tôt dans une épaisse nuit, à l'approche de trois ou quatre volumes du dernier pâme, qui jetteront un grand feu, & plus durable."[70]

characteristic action (*eg.*, borrowing money). As for the male vampires, "on croira qu'un seul aura sucé toutes les femmes, ou que tous n'en auront sucé qu'une."[72] This is another instance of hermaphroditism, a bit more covert than Cover's previous expositions.

At the Place des Victoires Fokl will set up a pure mirror to reveal to curious husands whether or not they are cuckolded by their wives. There is one catch to this revelation. Everyone in the audience who looks will be able to see the answer as well.

In his last scene, number thirteen, Fokl, always in search of what is new, was going to exhibit some anthropophagi for the French people. But upon he learned that here, as elsewhere, the strong eat the weak and the large eat the small, he decided to forego this plan for something of a truly different nature.

Fokl wants only to trade, and to be rewarded with merited applause.

> "En s'occupant pour le peuple, il travaille pour la portion du public la plus véritable, s'qui lit le plus longuement ce qu'elle pense."[73]

The collected pamphlets in *Bagatelles morales* enjoyed continued popularity in 1776, with third and fourth editions. They had placed their author in a well-defined niche regarding genre and capabilities. Cover's light *badinage* amused while chastising. His molieresque *castigo ridendo mores* was similar to what he placed on his title page, an adage which was his literary and personal watchword, *ridentem dicere verum*.

acceptable worship. They rejected the weak gods, those who were born mortal. The Romans were more interested in their power, goodness, and the virtues they instilled: concord, peace, health, liberty, prudence, faith, and courage. They rejected vicious gods, preferring useful ones, who did good for man. The overall changes made the gods less human, more intangible, more idealistic, more virtuous, and more civilized.

> "La capitale du monde se remplissait comme le sanctuaire de tous les dieux. Mais malgré ce polythéisme si excessif, on lui doit cette justice, qu'elle écarta de la nature divine l'inutilité, le vice, la faiblesse, la corporalité. Les dieux utiles, des dieux sages, des dieux forts, des dieux lavés de la matière furent les dieux plus respectables."[11]

The remoulding that the Romans did with the Greek gods is not at all different from the changes which the abbé would like to see take place within his France.

The second part points out the changes in dogma. Joyer poses several questions which troubled the ancients, but which also reappear in the theological and philosophical writings of his own century.

> "Dans toute religion les dogmes vraiment intéressans sont ceux qui tiennent aux moeurs, au bonheur et au malheur. L'homme est-il libre sous l'action des dieux? Sera-t-il heureux en quittant cette terre, s'il est malheureux, le sera-t-il éternellement?"[12]

The eighteenth century posed these basic questions on a plane removed from religion <u>per se</u>. G. Mauzi sees the epoch as a transition between theological thought and positive thought, between a philosophy of the absolute and a philo-

sophy of history--a century which did not entirely suppress the supernatural, but rationalized it.[77] The defining of morality was a constant problem, with as many definitions as there were philosophers. Happiness and unhappiness, as well as the question "Is man a free agent?" plagued Locke, Helvétius, d'Holbach, Diderot. Voltaire and Rousseau resolved the problems more readily, the first through utilitarianism, the second with a return to religious dogma. Cover's answer here was guided by Locke and Newton's restitive view, and channeled down a more central path by voltairian influence. The gospel which Cover cultivated always had a lot of grace in it, but never a superstitious one. He returned more closely to the traditional Catholic deity in his very late years. The abbé's unwavering belief is partly visible in his exposition of the evolution from the Greek to the Roman religion in this pamphlet.

While the Greeks were fatalists who saw everything all, good and evil, to be preordained their gods to deal only with what was glorious and heroic, the eternal Jupiter enveloped by the Greeks was soon modified, "Rome had only contained the palladium in greater epoch."[78]

Cover expresses the abundance of miracles in the later section of the pamphlet, by beginning and ending with a rationalization; "toute religion a son merveilleux",[79] and finally,

> "Les traditions /des romains/...sont sans doute aussi peu que les monstruosités réunies des Grecs; mais il ne faut pas les rejetter

With instruction in mind, the author develops the meaning of the word "Patrie", and points out what its influence was upon the mores and the happiness of the countries which understood it well. The essay on "Peuple" is intended to show whether or not the [illegible] people composed of men, and if they must be treated as such. A bit of humor ends his terse, well-stated introduction, and gives another insight into the author as a man.

> "Si cette façon de [illegible] ne vous fait pas lire, je consulterai pour ma gloire, (car les auteurs aient [illegible]) que le genre descriptif n'est pas fait pour la France, du moins pour la génération présente, à qu'il faut le réserver en Allemagne."

Someone said that the French language was becoming barren in its efforts towards purification. Voyer agrees that it might be true, at least concerning the word "patrie". He never cares to pronounced any more. When he asks a soldier what his [illegible], the answer is, "I serve the King." Why not say he serves the Country, since the King himself was made to serve it?

Then he traces the history and the use and unjustifiable of the word. Rome received it from Athens, and retained all its glory. The Franks were proud of it, as were the leaders throughout the centuries: Charlemagne, Charles V, Louis XII, Henri IV. Under Richelieu's ministry it was lost. Nowadays he hears "Kingdom", "State", or "France" instead.

In refutation, the writer reminds that its derivation is from <u>pater</u>, hence, the father image. He attributes the

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partner to Berthier, only to denounce him at every turn. The weapon of irony is never concealed; every word rings with it. It is cleverly done but the result is that his attitude is belligerent, oppressive, and menacing. The picture of Berthier as the general of an anti-materialist army, with Coyer as his number one spy and sidekick is humorous, but not comfortably so, because it is always the companion who dupes his superior, (viz., the allusion that theirs will be a veritable crusade against the evils of materialism, because "Tout est noble dans une Croisade."[12]).

The declarative that this crusade will be noble gives free rein to anything that the general and his spy might like to do, since the freedom of the church and the nobility was unlimited, even in matters which were not considered correct. There is a mordant comparison of Paris and ancient Athens as centers of both wisdom and folly. The eighteenth century Brutus uses a well-turned false logic that proves his arguments on all counts by alternating between the real and the ridiculous. Here is the unified exchange of nonsensical ideas which has prepared for the landslide of vituperation aimed at Berthier: materialism > soul > harmony > violin > academician > materialism. Each element will reappear up to the end.

There is a Bayle-like intricacy and interweaving of thoughts. Throughout the essay, Coyer continues to hit hard and more specifically the ideas on materialism. He makes

direct references to the materialistic writings of Helvétius and La Mettrie.

The end of the second offensive is more brutal than the first by dint of the open insults hurled at Berthier and the sardonic questioning of the validity of his christianity. "If you were called 'pantoufle, cruche, tête à perruque', you would bear up under the insults in a very christian manner, but the materialism contained in these very words would raise your dander,"[93] Having solidly snared Berthier in the rapidly thickening web of his incursion, Joyer now passes from the realm of isolated words to express his ideas, to the visual, the concrete, hence the materialistic aspect of these ideas. He questions the animation and attribution of a soul to a painting or a statue.

> "Un coup de ciseau de plus, Pigmalion animoit sa statue. Louons les Arts; mais ne blessons pas la Foi."[94]

The same sort of examples continues, not even hesitating to let the captured Berthier attempt to defend himself, a technique which Joyer usually at least rhetorically allows his victims. A poignant allusion to the value of the ignorance of the peuple (here, tongue in cheek, later, in other works, seriously) underscores the dishonesty of the oppressors and the pitiful situation of the oppressed. An aside against l'Ami des hommes and for his own Noblesse commerçante is rather cleverly integrated, but add nothing to his real argument. Following this, and for more than twenty pages, there is a vicious but warranted jibe at the author of

l'Apologie de Louis XIV sur la révocation de l'Edit de Nantes. This portion merits solitary attention because of its length, and especially because of its total dissociation with the subject matter of the Lettre au R. P. Berthier. The vastness of his topics in the Apologie criticism should also exclude it from the limited view of Berthier.[95]

Once back to the subject of materialism, Coyer wastes no time in arriving at his conclusion, or rather conclusions, for there are two of them, both leading to the same end: Berthier's ridiculous war against an exaggerated materialism. In the first conclusion Coyer mockingly encourages Berthier to continue fighting materialism. The second conclusion strikes a fleeting blow at another of Berthier's bêtes noirs, Jansenism, which he refers to as the "monster of Ypres". Coyer suggests using materialism, a more powerful monster, to quash Jansenism. He tells Berthier to "[illegible] it in [illegible] "[illegible] de Yprès". The second and final ending is much less strong than the first because it is superfluous, and because it starts and finishes in one sentence a topic which hinted at being new and interesting, but which remained undeveloped.

The vitriol in Lettre au R. P. Berthier sufficed to prompt its prohibition on 23 January, and its condemnation on 6 February.[96] This was the only one of Coyer's writings whose officially registered condemnation remains.

During the middle of the same year, Coyer was visiting the comte de Helmstatt at his château de Gouaix in Lorie.

While there, he was fulfilling one of his duties to the family which supported him. There are two letters from Coyer to Malesherbes as well as two requests for audience with him, regarding an intercession by Coyer with the directeur de librairie for an affaire de famille. The reigning duc de Bouillon felt that the family name was being tarnished by the Mémoires de Bordeaux. Just exactly how the Mémoires were soiling the family image was complicated and showed to what extent name influenced standing. In this case, the actual person being wronged was the long-dead uncle of Bouillon's great-grandmother. The uncle was Mazarin. His youngest niece, Marie-Anne Mancini, married Godefroy-Maurice de la Tour, duc de Bouillon, deuxième comte d'Evreux. It was this same duchesse de Bouillon who was responsible for the actual staging of Racine's Phèdre. The Mémoires de Bordeaux were not written in Bordeaux's 18th century--monsieur de Bordeaux, intendant des finances and attaché to Mazarin, died in 1660. They were not even written by him, according to Barbier and Quérard. In the eighteenth century Gatien de Courtilz openly spoke injuriously of Mazarin in these Mémoires. It was for this reason that Coyer's benefactor felt the call to stand up against the Mémoires de Bordeaux as indignantly as though his own generation had been calumniated.[97]

The period of the querelle de la noblesse commerçante which ended in 1756, marked the zenith of Coyer's career.

His name was among those in the center of literary attraction. He could correspond with Malesherbes about family politics. Critics and fellow artists listened to his opinions on matters of current interest--they often rejected them as they did Voltaire's or Berthier's, but his voice was heard. In 1760, his physical appearance became crystallized as well, in the oil portrait by Colson. The new confidence inspired by his success with Noblesse was a turning point in his boldness and firmness of style. He remained as idealistic as ever in his projects for reform. The Lettre au R. P. Berthier shows this new courage and self-confidence. He felt no less qualified when he launched a new attack in favor of his fellow freethinkers, right after Palissot's seathing mockery in Les Philosophes. Voltaire,[98] Rousseau and others directly attacked remained in the background[99] after the opening night, perhaps to show that they would not stoop to a petty quarrel with an author they considered unworthy of their time and energy.[100] Coyer, as the onlooker, felt compelled to execrate this unmerited and distasteful vilification. And Palissot's sharp tongue lashed back.

While Berthier in some ways returned to the style of Lettre à une dame angloise and Lettre à un grand, the Discours sur la satyre contre les philosophes, destined for the ears of his learned comrades, is as erudite as the Dissertation sur la différence de deux anciennes religions. Coyer demonstrates his profound familiarity with the Greek

theater in the body of his essay. I have said that the philosophes themselves made no direct and open reply to Palissot. Cover considered himself a philosophe. This would seem to imply that although not personally ridiculed in the play, Cover would by association avoid confrontation also. Here he is quite skillful. From the opening sentence to the closing, the abbé plays a triple role--in a style that is familiar to Gabriel François Cover. Almost by sleight of hand, he remains the effetandinw philosophe by claiming not to criticize Palissot per se. At the same time he quietly exposes the play as a weak copy of les Femmes savantes, a dullwitted failure, a personal satire, a comedy which was not comic, and subtly reveals it as dishonest, ill-mannered, and in extremely poor taste. Few playwrights could stand up against a detailed comparison with Molière or Aristophanes.

Always protecting the public good, Cover raises the broad question which will be his central theme:

> "L'honnêteté publique a-t-elle été blessée dans la pièce des Philosophes? C'est le point qu'il faut éclaircir, non pour réparer le mal qui est fait, mais pour prévenir celui qui pourroit se faire."[101]

With perfect unity, this same thought will end his essay. Molière succeeded and will always be popular because his mockery was not personal, but universal. Whereas the ancient Athenians laughed at the expense of their most illustrious citizens, they also laughed at themselves. At

least there was an "esprit d'équité". But if we cannot laugh at ourselves, or stand for others to laugh at us, is it just to laugh at them? With this, Coyer makes his thesis. He achieves his best criticism in the article through parables and historical examples. He studies Socrates, Homer, and Aristophanes closely and announces a moral:

> "Cette différence que la Grèce mit entre Homere & Aristophane, doit apprendre aux Ecrivains qu'une plume sage assure bien mieux leur gloire que la dent de la satyre."102

Palissot did not turn a deaf ear to this assault; he responded in kind. In one riposte several years later he cites part of a fable by La Fontaine which shows how he still feels [illegible] error:

> "Ceci s'adresse à vous, esprits du dernier ordre,
> Qui n'étant bon à rien, cherchez surtout à mordre;
> Vous vous tourmentez vainement.
> Croyez-vous que vos dents impriment leurs ouvrages
> Sur tant de beaux ouvrages?
> Ils sont pour vous d'airain, d'acier, de diamant."[103]

Coyer's reserve in his criticism of <u>Les Philosophes</u> was both characteristic and wise; Morellet was imprisoned for two months after his own verbal lunge at Palissot's play.[104]

For some time, Coyer has been preparing his first lengthy work, a three volume history of Jean Sobieski. At age fifty-four along with the habitually bitter tongue of some critics, the praise from others and his success have matured his pen. Even while writing on commission, the abbé always maintained an independent spirit. Grimm, despite his harshness towards Coyer, recognized the honesty in his works.

> "En général, il faut rendre la justice à M. l'abbé Coyer que ses écrits sont l'ouvrage d'un parfaitement honnête homme; ils ont toujours conservé le caractère estimable d'une bonne philosophie, d'une noble liberté, de l'amour enfin de la justice, de la vérité, de la tolérance, de l'humanité. On ne trouvera aucun écrivain qui ait plus invariablement de meilleurs principes et un meilleur but, et c'est un assez grand mérite dans un siècle ou tant de laches mercenaires ont vendu leur plume à la faveur et arrangent leurs idées selon le vent qui souffle."[105]

Some thought that the Noblesse commerçante was a work of command from someone in the government. It is certain that Chinki (1768) was done on request. There is nothing to prevent the belief that the Histoire de Jean Sobieski, roi de Pologne was written for his ward, whose mother was Jean Sobieski's granddaughter.[106] The history is dedicated to "son altesse Monseigneur le Prince de Bouillon."

Besides Coyer and the Chevalier de Jaucourt, who plagiarized an enormous amount of information from Coyer for his article on Poland in the Encyclopédie,[107] few philosophes were interested in Poland, although it was the homeland of the queen Marie-Leczinska. Even Voltaire, to whom historians usually attribute the paternity of modern historical methodology and the desire for accuracy, borrowed facts on Poland from Coyer.[108]

Regarding modern historiography, Coyer remains with the old school, but leans strongly towards an improvement in accuracy of representation. That is, whereas he looked upon history as being a moral guide as he stated in his preface to Sobieski, and his method was to choose a hero

and present him anecdotally. Here, as always, the abbé realized the value of the multiplicity of source material and first hand information.[109] His gravest faults were those of all the eighteenth century historians. R. N. Stromberg has succinctly stated the main problem:

> "Man was viewed abstractly rather than empirically, analytically rather than historically. Eyes were turned on man in his earthly setting with a new interest, but mostly on a rational man in a static society, not on historic man in a moving society. There was no notion of an organic growth. The idea of progress was an abrupt and really unexplained dawning of reason after centuries of meaningless darkness."110

Despite the static, anecdotal quality of the book, there is a distinct sense of motion in the portrayal of the hero, Jean Sobieski. There is also a feeling of completeness in the presentation as far as facts and visual images are concerned. Coyer divides his three volumes into nine books. The entire first book he devotes to a factual history of Poland and Polish rulers from the sixth century to the seventeenth. [illegible] material completed, the author begins with the life of [illegible] in book two. Each book thereafter takes [illegible] division, a small compartment, easily digested by the reader [illegible] period of time.

Because of his primary sources, most of the history is built around exciting and bloody battles in which Sobieski shone. Character portrayal, especially of Sobieski and the queen, is one of the author's stronger points. As was everything he ever wrote, this book was a vehicle for

Coyer's own ideas. He always gives special attention to population, education, the value of commerce, total liberty for nobility and peasantry, religious tolerance, historiographic precision.

The hero he chose plus his own honesty of presentation put Coyer in a difficult position. At times, as when he spoke out against absolute monarchy and religion, his position was dangerous. Often he is between opposing forces. He defends equality of classes, but seeks and praises nobility, even in facial expressions; he never misses an opportunity to rebel against conformity--particularly religious--yet he did not abandon his own title of abbé. He influenced many people at once with Sobieski, and the work impressed the deposed Polish king Stanislas to whose academy he belonged and whose protection he received. He dedicated it to his own protector, the duc de Bouillon, who was a direct descendant of his hero; but he risked putting the duke in an uncomfortable position at court because he protected such an outspoken writer. Pressure from an offended ruler could force the duke to quit his support for Coyer. Sobieski could also have drawn the queen's attention to him; only here he failed utterly, for the opposite resulted. L'Histoire de Jean Sobieski was suppressed 29 March 1761, and Coyer deemed it wise to take a quick trip until the situation became calmer. His censor was put in the Bastille.

Someone at court was putting pressure on Malesherbes' father, the Chancellier Lamoignon, who in turn was correct

his son into condemning the history. Letters between father and son show the discomfort of the former, and the justice of the latter.[112] However, Malesherbes finally signed an arrêt de conseil. He even penned out a detailed manuscript complete with citations showing where the book was undesirable. Grosclaude has given a résumé of these reasons: jokes on religion, exaggerated enthusiasm for republican government, disrespect for kings, especially in the House of Austria, and finally, numerous undesirably presented contemporary allusions.[113]

The government and the court were not the only ones harsh in their criticism of Sobieski. Although Voltaire showed amazement at Coyer's exile, he defended the author against persecution but not for the merit of his history.[114] A few critics found some deserving qualities, but always followed them by pointing out distinct weaknesses in style.[115] Others did not take the trouble to look for good points, and minced no words concerning what they considered affected, shallow and unworthy of being called history.[116] L'Histoire de Jean Sobieski still managed to maintain popularity because it had three editions the first year, a fourth in the OEuvres complètes (1782), and eventually saw translation into four foreign tongues.[117]

Where the abbé traveled during his self-imposed exile and how long he was absent remain unknown. It is possible that he spent some time in a neighboring château with his own

friends or friends of the Bouillon family. It is unlikely that he crossed the border into another country, because he gave his personal impressions of all other countries he visited (Italy, Holland, and England). Coyer probably went to visit Voltaire at Ferney. Voltaire wrote to his friend Damilaville on 7 September 1761,

> "J'ai chez moi l'abbé Coyer. Je suis encore à concevoir les raisons pour lesquelles on l'a fait voyager quelque temps. Il faut que j'aie l'esprit bien bouché."118

A significant incident occurred at a meeting between Coyer and Voltaire, and was recounted many times afterwards as an example of Voltaire's wit and Coyer's lack of it. It seems that the abbé dropped in unexpectedly on Voltaire at Ferney and made it known that he would like to spend at least six weeks as a house guest, to which Voltaire replied with a question,

> "M. l'abbé, savez-vous la différence qu'il y a entre Dom-Quichotte et vous? C'est qu'il prenait des auberges pour des châteaux, et vous prenez les châteaux pour des auberges."119

It seems most logical that the incident took place not during the 1761 visit, as Bachaumont suggests, but in the early 1770's, for the reason that it was never recorded in correspondence or elsewhere in the sixties. Bachaumont dates the anecdote in 1761, but does not report it until 1777. La Harpe's correspondence mentions it in 1777. Paul Claude Moulton related it in a letter to Jakob Heinrich Meister in 1777, as an example of Voltaire's continued spryness.[120]

Coyer probably spent some time at several different places, before arriving at Ferney. Sobieski was suppressed in March. Voltaire discussed its condemnation in April, and questioned whether Coyer were really in exile. On 6 July, the old philosophe wrote again to d'Argental about Coyer in a manner that would suggest that they had not yet met in person, but that Voltaire had heard rumors of Coyer's social image.

> "Si l'abbé Coyer parle comme il écrit il doit être fort aimable. Mais ma mère qui avait vu Despréaux disait que c'était un bon livre et un sot homme."121

There were others who did know Coyer personally and who openly stated that they found him dull company. On 17 November 1765, Diderot reported to Sophie Volland the activities in the salon world. One specific evening, the baronne d'Holbach shared her carriage with Diderot, M. de Sevelinge, and Grimm. On the way to a concert, Grimm commented on the baronne's conquest of the abbé Coyer.

> "Il est vrai qu'elle avait été exposé, pendant toute la soirée, a sa galanterie, qu'elle appelait du miel de Narbonne gâté."122

Two years later, the baronne still clung to the same image, as told by Diderot.

> "La baronne dit que l'abbé Coyer est du miel de Narbonne tourné, qu'il ne faut pas le lui envoyer."123

Such opinions, however did not hinder the abbé's social life, as is visible from his wardrobe given in the inventaire après décès. Coyer's wardrobe tends to suggest that his

milieu was more the "petite bourgeoisie" than the grand monde. Coyer undoubtedly felt more at ease in a social situation where he did not have to compete with the most glittering personalities of French society. Malibran mentions that, "Il fut peut-être le Diderot d'un salon à sa mesure."[124]

Among the greatest names of the century are examples of similar character traits. Voisenon describes Rousseau's most unpardonable crime as being boring, "but if all bores were exiled, there would be a lot less rent to collect."[125] A contemporary reporter of Parisian mores felt that women had a distinct advantage over men in conversation, and especially educated men, because the ladies with no learning spoke with ease and unconcern for grammatical errors.

> "Au lieu qu'un homme qui a fait ses études, craint de se tromper, il y va a pas mesurés, de sorte que cette timidité tient son esprit caché. Il y a des savans qui semblent hébetez en conversation, leur esprit est pour les matieres sérieuses, à non pour les petites choses dont on a accoutumé de s'entretenir."[126]

The real fault, then, lay in the customs as well as in the individual.

At the time of the condemnation of Sobieski, the Jesuits were not in the good favor of the public eye. A live hatred for priests had been visible for more than ten years. D'Argenson tells how their appearance on the street caused hoots and boos in 1753, how attendance at church and enrollment at Jesuit schools diminished. At carnival time one of the

favorite costumes was a ridiculous mockery of the habits of bishops, abbots, monks or nuns.[127] Satirical contes and poems appeared copiously in harsh criticism of the religious.[128] Finally, in 1762, the Parlement of Paris, confirmed by an edict from the king, suppressed the Society of Jesus.[129] It was an uncomfortable time for members of the Jesuit orders. It was also uncomfortable for Coyer, vis-à-vis Sobieski. There exists nothing to indicate why he began extensive travels in the years that followed, but it is difficult not to seek an explanation in the political temperament of the times, especially concerning the first trip, which followed closely behind his self-imposed exile. In 1763-64, he went to Italy, in 1765 he was in London, and in 1769 he travelled in Holland.

Still in France, but not in Paris, in 1763 Coyer became a member of the Académie de Nancy. Doubtlessly his acceptance was influenced by the good favor which l'Histoire de Jean Sobieski brought from the deposed Polish king Stanislas, founder of the academy. It meant a lot to Coyer to be able to say that he was an academician. It was agreed in general that the members of an academy should be the intellectually elite, chosen by merit, devoted to the exchange of ideas and the difusion of knowledge. With such definite criteria, membership in an academy was a guarantee of prestige.[130] Unfortunately, although membership was to be based on merit according to the statutes of individual academies,

true equality did not exist. It was a tight circle which excluded all who did not have the means to conform with the cultural norms that defined it. Its limits were always in the talented bourgeoisie. Only in very rare exception did the merchants, manufacturers, or artisans attain academic entry.[131]

> "Elles sont fondées par la noblesse provinciale, la magistrature, le clergé, par des privilégies."[132]

Provincial academies increased their number rapidly,[133] in fact, much too rapidly according to some.. Voltaire saw their violent growth as "funeste au progrès du bon goût" and envisioned all of France becoming one huge academy from Pau to Dunkirk.[134] Besides the inequality of membership, most constituents agreed with Diderot as to the main fault of provincial academies: they were not the Académie Française.

> "Le style des académies provinciales ne saurait être celui de l'Académie françoise, il ne faut pour s'en convaincre que lire les ouvrages et les discours mêmes des principaux membres qui les composent.'"[135]

The abbé Coyer's speech at his reception into the Académie de Nancy on Sunday, the eighth of May, 1763, falls squarely into the category described above. In a rigid construction of pyramid nature, the abbé praises Stanislas, lauds the ancients, gives a detailed exposition of the question, "What is a Man of Letters?", returns to the ancients. and ends with a final word about Stanislas. The speech is dull. It fawns to the academicians who inducted him. It says

nothing new or striking, and it is platitudinous to a degree which has to make this speech the most unoriginal piece Coyer composed. But, it is more revealing of Coyer the man, the "écrivain de troisième ordre", than anything else he wrote; and it is for that reason that I shall study it in detail later.

Coyer sees the homme de lettres as a sage, an enlightened intellectual whose reward is glory. He teaches and he learns. His harshest critic is the public, which coldly despises mediocrity. How could he not have been objectively aware of his own vision in the public eye when he said,

> "Le Public, est sans miséricorde. Volez à l'entrée de la carrière, il vous applaudit. Tombez au milieu ou au terme, il vous couvre de poussière. Cependant quel est le génie toujours semblable à lui-même?"136

Enlightenment watchwords like reason, nature, instruire, justice, etc. appear frequently and place him among the philosophes. But the overall feeling is that, while sincere--because everything Coyer wrote was honest, forthright and sincere--they are the shadows of what all other philosophes had said before him. As already witnessed in Lettre à une jeune dame, Découverte de la pierre philosophale, l'Année merveilleuse, and parts of the Noblesse commerçante, Coyer's originality sometimes lay in the reshaping and reusing of someone else's basic ideas.

Now that he was an academician, the abbé could add a title behind his name in publications, "membre de l'académie

de...". He was soon to be able to add another to the Académie de Nancy, for during his trip through Italy, he was asked to join the Académie des Arcades in Home.

Coyer's trip to Italy lasted from 24 August 1763 until 13 October 1764. He did not write up his travel experiences until more than ten years later (1775). When he finally published the Voyages d'Italie et de Hollande, he rationalized their appearance in a statement of intent, as travel literature was anything but new especially travel in Italy. Since Italy had so much to offer for everyone from the artist to the politician or even "l'homme trivial", he [illegible] to join together the most interesting details of what he saw, in order to please all these varied individuals. If his readers would add Coyer's observations to those of all the other travel writers, they would have a complete picture of the country, the people, the customs, the government, and the culture. As an unnecessary sugar coating to this pill of mediocrity, Coyer used an epistolary stylistic device, writing to an imaginary, enlightened lady still in France.

These travel letters are as revealing about Coyer's personality as a man not at work, as the academy speech was about his literary fears and ambitions. His best salon technique is obvious in his sucreries to the imaginary Aspasie.[137]

There is no order in the author's exposition except his itinerary. He tends to recount the same topics which

have always interested him: depopulation, justice, safety, celibacy among the religious, the values of a burgeoning commerce, and then local customs and mores such as festivals, freedom of women, even the piety of prostitutes. He reveals personal facts such as his enjoyment of good wine, good food, and tobacco. His upper-class tendencies are not hidden; he travels with a lackey and a handsome sum of money for expenses. He tells what kinds of accomodations he receives. He also displays his own generosity of spirit and innate kindness and honesty. A certain penchant for morbidity reveals itself frequently in incidents which he recounts as being humorous. This was not a rare characteristic in the eighteenth century. Even Louis XV was so fascinated with and tormented by death that he used to send out men to count the number of new tombstones in Parisian cemeteries.[138]

During this voyage, the abbé met a number of important individuals: the Pope (on Christmas day), the king of Sardinia, the duke of Parma, the king of Naples, the grand duke of Tuscany, and the king of the two Sicilies, to whom he had the self-confidence to present a copy of his Sobieski.

The year of Coyer's return from Italy was the same year Palissot published his La Dunciade, most well-known for its attacks on Voltaire, but which lashes out at many other of his contemporaries. He mentions Coyer on three different instances, all of which are reeking with sarcasm and irony regarding the abbé's still frivolous reputation because of

the Bagatelles.[139] Whereas Coyer felt obliged to defend his fellow sophists who appeared in Palissot's Les Philosophes, he did nothing to defend himself. In fact, soon afterwards, he left on another trip.

In 1765 he spent several months in England. This stay resulted in membership in a third academy, the Royal Society of London, considerably more impressive than the preceding ones, and another travel account. Nouvelles observations sur Angleterre give a selective view of the country, minus the personal touch, i.e., "quelques observations plus utiles que curieuses."[140] As he is wont to do, Coyer reports only those things which substantiate the fundamental ideas and beliefs which he has set forth elsewhere on population, theater, education, justice, religious tolerance, agriculture and the marine, clubs, the national character, etc. These letters could be compared to Voltaire's Lettres anglaises, without, of course, the voltairian verve which Coyer emulated.

The few known personal facts about the abbé's visit concern his admission into the Royal Society of London. Coyer wrote to Voltaire on June 14 requesting the letter of recommendation from a member necessary for acceptance, which Voltaire probably accorded him.[141] However, Coyer was nominated by the duc de Nivernois, and supported by George Lyttleton, Charles Morton, Thomas Birch, and Matthew Maty--no mention of Voltaire's name.[142]

The Society was large, perhaps too large according to the abbé Leblanc.[143] There were 400 national members and about 150 foreign ones. It met in a simple lecture hall, and the members listened willingly to anyone, member or not, who had a worthwhile communication. All in all, it was rather a mixture of the Académie des Inscriptions and the Académie des Sciences de Paris, combining both hautes sciences and belles lettres. With members like d'Alembert, Buffon, Jussieu, Voltaire, Boyle, Newton, Dryden, Addison and Pope,[144] to mention only a few, it is no wonder that Coyer was anxious to add his own name to the roll.

There was still another incident with Voltaire and Coyer as the protagonists, this time due to the old patriarch. Voltaire was nearly as famous for denying his works of questionable censorship permission, as he was for writing them. In 1766, Voltaire tried to attach the Pansophe letters to Coyer's pen. In November and December of 1766, he wrote more than a dozen letters to his friends and to news-spreading acquaintances saying that the abbé Coyer was trying to make it known that Voltaire, and not the abbé, had written the Lettre au Docteur Pansophe. He repeatedly mentioned stylistic traits of "répétitions et longueurs" which were characteristic of Coyer. Besides, Coyer was in England when it was published and he had met the people mentioned in the letter. Voltaire wrote to the marquise Du Deffand,

> "il est fort mal à lui qui se dit mon ami, de s'être servi de mon nom, et de feindre que j'écris une Lettre à Jean-Jaques quand je dis

> qu'il y a sept ans que je ne lui ai écrit. Je me ferais sans doute honneur de cette Lettre... si elle était de moi. Il y a des choses charmantes et de la meilleure plaisanterie; il y a pour-tant des longueurs, des répétitions, et quelques endroits un peu louches."145

When Coyer indignantly and vehemently protested the charge, Voltaire tried to change the direction of his attack to Charles Bordes from Lyon. Not many people were fooled as to who had written the satire against Rousseau. Grimm recognized the true author immediately, in spite of his protestations. Furthermore, he could not resist the temptation to take a lunge at Coyer.

> "Il /Voltaire/ prétend qu'elle est de M. l'abbé Coyer. Je conseille à l'abbé Coyer de prendre M. de V[illegible] dire au mot, et nous dirons que cette lettre est ce que M. l'abbé Coyer a écrit de mieux."146

In some respects this would have been correct. Coyer was surely profiting from this unrequested publicity, but his honesty and his desire to become friends with Rousseau kept him from playing along. To correct the injustice Coyer wrote to Jean-Jacques' publisher, Guy, on 2 January 1767 denying what Voltaire had attributed to him, and asking Guy to intercede with Rousseau on his behalf.

> "Vous savez l'admiration que j'ai toujours eue pour les grands talents de M. Rousseau, votre ami, et que j'ai toujours désapprouvé les persécutions qu'on lui suscite dans son malheur. Je serais très fâché qu'on me mit au nombre de ses persécuteurs, et, d'ailleurs, je n'ai jamais emprunté le nom de personne. Je me sers du mien, ou je garde l'anonyme."147

Coyer's insistance upon honesty is but one of the constancies in his character makeup and personality. This could be why he felt qualified to keep a moral thread stitched throughout his works. Such consistency in both person and writing is also one reason why he remained a salon bore and a second-rate author. While he varied stylistic approach and genre, his ideas remained ossified, and staunchly plodded through every pamphlet, letter, treatise, or history. Coyer was aware of his weaknesses. He received the critical remarks about his writing without retort. He was grateful for the rewards which his work brought and was proud of the literary laurels he had received. His successes were frequent enough to encourage him to continue writing.

What did occasionally change in his works seems to be the amount of inspiration. Sufficient proof is visible in the comparison of firy, pithy, even passionate publications such as Plaisir pour le peuple, the Lettre au R. P. Berthier, and De la prédication, with the palid and flowery Lettre à une dame, or his acceptance speech for the Académie de Nancy. De la prédication is a sermon against sermons. It raised a storm of opinions, both for and against, at its appearance. Judging by its title, one would think that the fifty-nine year old abbé had finally decided to assume the duties of the cloth. Instead, Coyer devotes the entire first half to proving that throughout all time from Adam to ancient Rome

and Greece, to Massillon, Bourdaloue and Bossuet, no preacher has succeeded in ameliorating the mores of his era. The deists cheered and the religious called him an atheist. Coyer is in fact no less a believer than he ever was. This forceful beginning leads to his main tenet: that it is up to the government to correct the evils of society where christianity (especially Catholic christianity) has failed. From the moment he poses his principal idea, the spark disappears and the style returns to what his critics considered typical of Coyer. His plan is for the development of an ideally constructed, simplistic government which would keep the citizens in line by punishment and reward. The rules are simple: restoration of paternal authority, marital authority, and authority of master over servant. There must be a good education system. The nobility will be controlled and the peuple respected. In the final paragraph he returns to the role of the fist-shaking preacher and ends with a threat or a prediction of coming violence and internal uprisings.

The tiff between Coyer and Voltaire that same year did not hurt the relationship of the two men. Coyer devotes an entire section of De la prédication to flinging laurels on Voltaire's tragedies and La Henriade as powerful vehicles for preaching. Voltaire discusses the Prédication in numerous letters, not always too flatteringly.

> "Toute la partie du livre où il se moque des sermonneurs est fort bonne, et la partie où il veut établir des censeurs lui en attirera."[140]

It was a subject which always attracted Voltaire's sardonic retorts, and one which he treated frequently himself. It is possible to see his mind reworking what the abbé had written, into what Voltaire might have done. Fortunately for Coyer, he got no further than considering it.

> "Il méritait d'être mieux fait, et pouvait être très plaisant. Il fallait commencer par dire qu'Adam avait prêché Eve, et qu'au sortir du sermon Eve le fit cocu avec le diable. Il fallait continuer sur ce ton, et on serait mort de rire."149

In Prédication, Coyer is more a philosophe than ever. He could even have given the article the sub-title "Apologie déiste et philosophique de la religion." Coyer sees the philosophe as the porte-paroles of his theories.

> "Il écarte tout instrument de surprise; il s'en tient à la simplicité de la raison; il ouvre à tous les yeux le livre de la nature qui parle à tous les esprits une langue intelligible; il cherche la source de la morale dans la constitution de ses choses; il ne suppose rien; il prouve:...il trace une ligne bien marquée entre le vice et la vertu. Il ne force point la nature; il permet d'user de tous ses dons, sans en abuser, ce n'est pas un homme sans passions qu'il veut former, mais un homme honnête avec des passions."150

It is no wonder that Joseph Romain Joly, in the preface to his Histoire de la prédication, refers to Bayle as Coyer's oracle and master.[151]

Bayle could well have been the abbé's guide in the violence of his verbal destruction. Such energy shows a courageous evolution in Coyer's writing. Both Voltaire and Machaumont predicted that the work would be seized as

condemned,[152] although it was not. One such vitriolic example is his criticism of Paris. Nothing new is said, but he regurgitates all its vices and evils in three small, compact pages. He is equally as venomous in his most misogynic burst against the fair sexes.

> "Ce ne sont ni les femmes sçavantes, ni les précieuses ridicules qui nuisent; ce sont ces femmes hardies qui par leur rang & leur liberté dans le désordre, enseignent à leur sexe que la pudeur est ignoble & basse. Ce sont ces brillantes prostituées à qui nous pardonnerions peut-être de ruiner les fortunes, si elles ne ruinoient pas les sentiments; ce sont ces meres de famille étrangères à leur famille; ce sont ces marâtres qui font haïr à un pere ses premiers enfants, & qui le flatent pour le dépouiller..."[153]

Coyer had toyed with governments in general many times in the past. Découverte de l'isle frivole showed corrupt French affairs, the epistolary travels through Italy, Holland and England noted governmental facts in other countries (although he had not yet presented his reflections in unified form). The Histoire de deux colonies [illegible] in detail the history of Polish government. The abbé had not yet joined the abundant group of ideal civilization and government depictors (along with Montesquieu, Rousseau, Anquetil-Duperron, etc.). Although the aim of De la prédication is certainly not to show the intricacies of what Coyer considered to be the perfect government, he has nonetheless begun to develop certain theories regarding a non-existent entity designed to rule. The policies are based on a punishment and reward system. From here he extends the plan into

justice. Everything must necessarily turn around an uncorrupted morality. The angle has shifted, but he continues with the idea in greater detail as mentioned above, until he has projected his theories and proved their possibilities by various examples from history. In _Prédication_, Cover never gets farther than a structure to insure morality, all depending on man's innate goodness. In his next publication, he enters fully into the ideal society, and includes city planning.

While Cover was writing and publishing _De la prédication_, his fellow academician from the Royal Society of London, Dr. Maty, told about the discovery of Patagonian giants during a recent voyage. Naturally such a find caused a big stir; no one wanted to believe that giants really existed. People began openly to disavow the doctor's claims. Cover was again ready to take up his pen to defend a philosophe. In his _Lettre au docteur Maty sur les géants patagons_ in 1767, Cover not only upholds the credibility of such an existence, but also considers it his personal task to write their history _avant la lettre_. He briefly sketches out their mores, institutions, police, laws, government, way of life, and their capital. He uses the same ideas he has mentioned elsewhere, but adds a few new ones as well. It is interesting to note that this abbé, who never hung up the habit and never renounced his faith, did not make a place for religion in his exotic community.[14]

Since a large amount of Coyer's work is written in the first person, one might wonder why he never attempted any drama, especially when he considered the comédie larmoyante an ideal vehicle for betterment of mores. The farcical example of a model comedy which he traces for the giants is of medieval simplicity and completely lacking in finesse. Rather than amusing or instructive theater for adults, his comedy would be more appropriate for a children's puppet show. As for Coyer's possibilities in verse, he admitted readily that that was not his talent.[154a]

This defense of the existence of giants would have been ideal for salon discussions. The style suggests the lightness of touch needed in current topics bantered around at a social gathering. Also, there is the exotic flair and the interest which an aberration in human nature drew throughout a century vastly attracted to ludicrically proportioned beings or things (viz., Voltaire's Micromégas, and earlier Cyrano's Voyages dans la lune). As for Coyer's salon appearances, Grimm's letter mentioned earlier[155] confirms his continued presence at the baronne d'Holbach's gatherings--a natural atmosphere for discussion of the Lettre au Docteur Maty, for the company would have known the doctor personally.

Mentioned briefly in the Lettre au Docteur Maty was an idea which Coyer developed into an anonymous pamphlet all its own. The same idea also appears in his Voyage

d'Italie. Always concerned about the salubrity of the city and the unmarred possibilities for the good health of the citizens, Coyer proposed a plan whereby cemeteries would be relocated at a considerable distance outside the city. Embalming and inhumation processes being a far cry from what they are today, it is not surprising that cemeteries became storehouses of filth, stench and generally unhealthful atmosphere. They were hangouts for bums and an unfortunate playground for children and dogs, who found femurs and tibias delightful toys. Lavisse called the cimetière des Innocents a "charnier nauséabond."[156] Given Coyer's penchant for morbid humor, his name easily fills the anonymity of Etrennes aux morts et aux vivans ou projet utile partout où l'on est mortel.[157]

Having always been harsh on petits maîtres and overly made-up women, Coyer does not let the chance slip by to play upon the terrible odors which their superfluous perfumes and pommades will not be able to mask after the decomposition of their bodies. This humor again finds a target with the professional religious. As Coyer develops the outline of a better plan for the care of the dead, he finds room to speak out against his habitual targets: injustice of magistrates, ministers, soldiers. He uses the pamphlet as a vehicle for correcting moeurs, defending the country, calling for tolerance. If the reader does not like his first plan, the author suggests burning the corpse,

in order to finish with "éclat". Besides, cremation would be an easy test for sainthood. His practical side cannot go wanting. As an end to the first chapter, Coyer finds commercial value in cremation. He proposes to gather the condensed vapor in the oven, mix it well with "sel marin urine", to yield a product similar to "sel amoniac". The second and last chapter tells how to make mourning less frightening, disagreeable, and barbaric.

In Etrennes, Coyer openly treated a serious project humorously. The same year (1768) he also used a different technique for his didacticism. Chinki, histoire chinchinoise qui peut servir à d'autres [illegible][158] is a philosophical tale, an allegory of France where the laborer is overcome by taxes and sees the destruction of his entire family because of the impossibility of becoming a member of a corporation, [illegible] to work at any other trade.

There was never any question of receiving permission to print his harsh criticism of "maîtrises et jurandes" because Coyer wrote the book on command and received a payment of 2,000 livres from the king himself "à titre de gratification pour ouvrages concernant l'administration," i.e., Noblesse commerçante, Chinki.[159] The government wanted the eventual suppression of the confining rules of the corporations. Following the publication, a short term correction appeared, but the old methods soon took over again. The

final suppression of the maîtrise was effected eight years later, in 1776.[160] Chinki, like the Noblesse commerçante enjoyed success. There were five publications by 1824. While the technique of exotic allegory was anything but new in Coyer's century, he does use it in a slightly different way. Instead of the unveiling of an ideal society, he shows the destruction of an ideal society in the microcosm of Chinki's family and his community. By using short chapters, the author gives a certain terseness to the development. It is at times dull due to the all too similar events, and is overtly didactic.

His real work designed to instruct, and for once in great detail (as opposed to the numerous sketches he had outlined for someone "more capable" to carry out), came after his trip to Holland (1769). Coyer's Plan d'éducation was published in 1770, when he was sixty-three. It is the summit of his idealistic altruism. In the preface he admits that his work is the synthesis of many others, but it is in this synthesis which lies the value of the work. He felt that the odds were 1000 to one that he would not succeed, because his ideas were far too different from the current practices. However, in an almost religious zeal, he admits that that one out of 1000 will suffice for the patriotic writer who has served his country.

Coyer divides his treatise into two main sections: physical education and moral education. Then he deals with the makeup of the college itself. In the first part he

treats the young child, and how he should be clothed, fed, tended, the value of exercise, fresh air, rest, cleanliness, and endurance of all climates. As usual, he is against constant surveillance by doctors, whom he finds useless except in emergencies--nature does a better job. The abbé gives detailed suggestions on how to develop the child's muscles through exercise. He is especially in favor of swimming.

The second part of the Plan d'éducation involves what the child will learn--his course of study: nature, the arts, language, reading, writing, mathmatics, history, many sciences, logic, metaphysics, philosophy, elocution, religion, music, and morality. As a good philosophe, he finds room for virtue, justice, bienfaisance, courage and happiness. Regarding the college plant, he discusses location, ratio of students to teachers, who should be allowed to teach, and texts. He insists on equality among students to a certain degree, but deceives himself when he discusses which students should receive what kind and extent of education, for he favors the nobility. Finally, he goes year by year discussing every aspect of each class. After telling what kinds of programs are needed by differently populated areas (i.e., country, small towns, cities) he poses a number of objections which he expects to arise in regard to his study. Into his twelve year plan, he incorporates several trips, which he finds educational. He ends his strikingly modern model with a patriotic cry: "Veillez au salut de la nation."

The changes in Coyer's interests and his gradual evolution in stylistics were not obvious to his public, because as he became more nationalistic and more didactic, there were repeated re-prints of his older material in his earlier tones. In 1769-1770, there were editions of Chinki and Bagatelles, Maty was translated into German, and Sobieski into Russian. His own fame and importance had not diminished, for he still met some important people (the prince and princess at the Hague), and was read by others (Marie Antoinette mentions in her correspondance that she was enjoying and benefiting from the Bagatelles.)[161] Nor was the quality of his work universally considered mediocre, for Chinki had once been published as part of Voltaire's L'Homme aux quarante écus (a ruse of Coyer's publisher, the widow Duchesne, to draw more clients[162]), and in 1772-1773, another of his pieces was published in an edition of Diderot's Œuvres.[163] Also, his language contributions were given at great length, shoulder to shoulder with examples from the century's best authors in the Alletz dictionary of neologisms.[164] The abbé was slowing down. Before his death, nothing else which could be considered original appeared.

In 1775, he published the Voyages d'Italie et de Hollande, eleven years after his trip to Italy, and five years after his visit to Holland. Similarly, his Nouvelles observations sur Angleterre in 1779 came fourteen years after the trip. His translation of Blackstone's Criminal

Code of England[165] sold so few copies that the widow Duchesne did not find it appropriate to include it in his posthumous Œuvres complètes.[166]

A letter by Henri Louis Lekain on 5 August 1776 indicates that the sixty-nine year old abbé had paid another visit to Ferney, but no details describe his reception or stay.[167]

Coyer made his will on 13 June 1778, in which he shows an increasing bitterness in his outlook on his private world. He prepares to dispose of his possessions, valuable and worthless alike. It is here only that he mentions his remaining family, favorite nephews and nieces, a cousin, none of whom were identifiable in more detail. Typical of his concern for those less fortunate than he, the first two legatees are his cook and his valet, and the duc de Bouillon is, surprisingly, third, receiving the portrait of the king of Prussia. Other [illegible] relatives and friends include his library, his manuscripts, a gold watch, an oriental topaze ring, and various sums of money. Nothing can be traced today. The abbé had then disposed of his earthly goods; there remained only his body and the memory of him and his endeavors. The last few paragraphs of his will prove that even while face to face with his posterity, an acrimonious smile must have appeared as he indulged in his final example of graveyard humor.

> "Je ne donne rien à l'Eglise qui ne m'a rien donné et, d'ailleurs, ce ne sont pas les grandeurs de l'Eglise qui plaisent à Dieu. Au reste, je quitte

> sans regrets la compagnie des fous pour aller dans la patrie des sages.
>
> On rendra mon corps à la terre comme on voudra, [illegible] qu'elle [illegible] regardera bien plus [illegible] les morts, mais s'il prenait envie à la parenté ou à l'amitié de conserver [illegible], [illegible] à Baume, le lieu de ma naissance, [illegible] mes cendres reposeront, voici mon épitaphe: 'A la mémoire de Gabriel François Coyer, prêtre sans fonction de prêtrise; il pensa qu'il était plus important d'écrire pour son pays. Il est mort le..., l'an..., agé de... FELIX QUI POTUIT RERUM COGNOSCERE CAUSAS.'"[168]

Three years later, about half a year before he died, it was as though Coyer had a direct communion with the Deity, that provides the power "rerum cognoscere causas", but his final verbal purge was anything but happy. In <u>Essai sur la prédication, carême entier, en un seul discours</u>[169] there appears a different abbé Coyer, not in the subjects he treats, but in approach and in an overwhelming display of piety, or at least a painful awareness of his impending confrontation with his Deity. Earlier in his life he gone the same problems over and over, first mockingly, then seriously, annotated and reinforced by numerous footnotes from contemporaries and antiquity. Now he is agitated and angry, sentiments which he had always previously dominated. He seems worried by the worthlessness of his fellow man's [illegible] and sinful condition. For the first time, Coyer the deist--never professed like Voltaire, but obvious in his works--calls not only upon God the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Ghost. At times he approaches the fanaticism which he had always roundly condemned. No longer

caring whether he steps on noble or royal toes, he passionately embarks on a mission to shame the king and every subject (except the peuple whom he still protects). He seems to be seeking a catharsis through the purgation of others. Maybe he felt remorse for having secured what others enjoyed. Perhaps he enjoyed it as well. One wonders where this hellfire and brimstone energy was in the younger priest.

The first few pages only fleetingly suggest Coyer's style and imagery, ex., his frequently employed firey metaphor has changed to Godly or satanly fire. Later, when his usual targets reappear (citizens, corrupt morality, injustice, commerce and agriculture, nursing children, defense of the peasant), the former Coyer returns with them, but is intensified. His words scream from the pages like those of a preacher from the pulpit. This sermon might have played the role of the abbé's final confession. Throughout his life, Coyer was the model for altruism and bienfaisance. Yet somehow he failed. A smattering of good results came about, but all too few. Maybe he restated the same propositions over and over because he realized no one was listening to him. Now he is shouting to make himself heard. If he has failed to reach his own goals as a writer, he can still redirect his methods. Here he almost desperately returns to the respect demanded by and owed to an old man, experienced, and a man of the church.

In an honest beginning he tells his readers that "On ne trouvera pas dans le Sermon certaines formules consacrées,

que l'on croit, sand doute, fort propres à toucher les coeurs."[170] Immediately he damns mankind for its sinfulness ever since Adam, "maudite /la terre/ dans ses entrailles brulantes, ou ce premier péché creusa l'enfer."[171] Man is unworthy to call himself christian, and he should stop lying about it to himself and to others. Voyer places himself beyond the sinful thronges.

> "Eh! plut à Dieu que nous, Ministres du Seigneur, nous n'eussions à vous reprocher que des vanités."[172]

Vanities of genealogies, titles, pretensions, luxe--maybe then the preachers would be able to make christians out of them. He tells how Babylon /Paris/ was rotten ripe by mocking the lives of the prelates and the peuple in the midst of famine, while encouraging vice and villainous virtue.

> "Ces Prêtres, livrés au luxe & à la molesse, cacatent bien plus à étendre les superstitions des Peuples qu'à les détrier."[173]

He now twist to the same critic Voyer has always attacked in that now they bear a less latent: "Ah, he has opened the way for the second point: "Are you citizens?"

One by one, he exposes ministers of justice out of joint, warriors, the rich, the great, the monarch, the poets-orators-philosophes. He is especially harsh with writers.

"Are you men?" He does not have to look hard to find examples of unsafe streets, illegitimate children who die in unfit foundling homes, and infectious hospitals and prisons. He makes a pitiful plea to husbands who chapter

their family duties to go out gambling, deceiving, sinning.

Coyer the preacher, after a tired pause, admits that he does not know how to end his sermon. He certainly does not intend to bless his listeners in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Omniscient and omnipotent God has revealed to his minister what their fate will be. Noah's sermons before the flood must have been of similar nature, and received in the same way.

In September of 1761, there was a rumor that Coyer had died.[174] But in truth, it was a year later, while putting the finishing touches on his Œuvres complètes that Gabriel François Coyer caught a summer cold which he did not properly treat and which ultimately led to his death on 1st July 1762, at age seventy-five. He was esteemed and regretted by his friends.[175]

M. Deslandres has posed a fundamental question regarding the abbé Coyer:

> "Comment un écrivain, célèbre au XVIIIè siècle par son esprit..., est-il tombé dans un oubli profond, même auprès de ses compatriotes?"[176]

It is true that the best known contemporary critics considered him mediocre and did not hesitate to state their opinions. Bachaumont: "Cet ex-jésuite avait une réputation éphemère, comme ses ouvrages."[177] La Harpe: "C'est une perte médiocre pour les lettres, quoi qu'il ne fût ni sans mérite ni sans esprit."[178] But it is also true that this same opinion was profoundly colored by Coyer's frivolous literary beginnings.

La Harpe: "Ses premiers ouvrage, intitulés <u>Bagatelles morales</u> et qui ne sont en effet, que des bagatelles, étaient d'un homme qui s'efforçait d'être aussi léger dans ses écrits que la nature l'avait fait lourd dans la société."[17]

Grimm: "C'est la critique de nos moeurs et surtout de la frivolité qui a fourni le fond de ses meilleurs écrits, et ce concours qui de la frivolité nationale n'a fait cependant lui-même que des livres très frivoles. Les premiers furent au moins écrits avec une sorte de légèreté; mais cette légèreté n'était point du tout le caractère naturel de son esprit. Sa conversation fut toujours lourde et stérile, et ses dernières ouvrages ressemblent beaucoup trop à sa conversation."[18]

Another possible reason is to show "il se vit oublié de son vivant,"[19] a fact he attributes to [illegible]. If so, he had [illegible] the reputation and [illegible] attention could have placed him in a position worthy of the admiration of the constitutional clergy.[20]

It was doubtlessly the unevenness of his work which turned [illegible], and [illegible] critics continually mentioned him. But even then [illegible] worthy, "il faut beaucoup pardonner à un homme qui a eu dépitage complètement ses contemporains."[21] Despite success or failure <u>vis-à-vis</u> his contemporaries, he [illegible] high [illegible]. It is really so important to find out Chevrier's attitude about himself.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER II

[1] William Morton Fullerton, Terres françaises: Bourgogne, Franche-Comté (Paris: A. Colin, 1909), pp. 247-24[illegible].

[2] Stendhal, Le Rouge et le noir, cited in ibid., [illegible].

[3] Joyer's oil portrait was done by Jolson, a painter from Burgundy, who was for some forty years the artistic handyman at the château de Souillon: architect, gardner, sculptor, painter. The portrait depicts Joyer around age fifty-three. Malibran, l'Abbé Joyer, p. 54.

[4] The numerous biographical dictionaries which mention Joyer have for the most part drawn their information from the introduction made by the editor of Joyer's Œuvres complètes, la veuve Duchesne, whose posthumous recounting of Joyer's life is sketchy and at times erroneous. Since no real biography was ever done, the widow Duchesne is accepted as one who knew Joyer well, and as a reasonably dependable. l'Abbé Joyer, Œuvres complètes (Paris: [illegible] Duchesne, [illegible]-1773), [illegible] Vols. (referred to hereafter as Œ.C.) By far the most reliable and complete account of Joyer's life was the thorough detective work of J. Malibran in his unpublished Sorbonne thesis, op. cit.

[5] Joyer, Œ.C., pp. i-ii; F. Deslandres, "Un humoriste oublié," Mémoires de l'Académie de Besançon (Besançon: 1931), séance du 19 novembre 1931, pp. 203-204; Dictionnaire de Biographie française (Paris: Librairie Letouzey et ané, 1951), ed. Roman d'Amat, p. 1142; Malibran, l'Abbé Joyer, pp. 14-1[illegible].

[6] Duchesne, ed. Œ.C., p. iv.

[7] Ibid., p. ii.

[8] Jacob, ed., Les Chefs-d'œuvres inconnus, p. vii.

[9]Mornet, Origines, pp. 55, 135; the Cannon of Sainte Geneviève, Le Courbayer, in 1728, ibid.

[10]Ibid., p. 203.

[11]Ibid., p. 139.

[12]Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 204.

[13]Rutlidge, Essai sur le caractère et les moeurs des Français comparés à celles des Anglais (London: 1776), p. 51.

[14]"Paris est rempli d'abbés, clercs tonsurés, qui ne servent ni l'église ni l'état, qui vivent dans l'oisiveté la plus suivie, à qui ne sont que des inutilités à des fadaises....Dans plusieurs maisons on trouve un abbé à qui l'on donne le nom d'AMI, à qui n'est qu'un honnête valet qui commande la livrée. Il est le complaisant soumis de madame, assiste à sa toilette, surveille la maison, dirige au dehors les affaires de monsieur. Ses personnages à rabot se rendent plus ou moins utiles, caressent leur protecteur pendant plusieurs années, afin d'être mis sur la feuille....La femme de chambre leur dit tout ce qui se passe; ils sont instruits des secrets du maître, de la maîtresse et des valets. Ensuite viennent les précepteurs, qui sont aussi des abbés. Dans les maisons de quelqu'importance, on ne les distingue guère des domestiques. Pendant le cours de l'éducation, on les ménage un peu: dès qu'elle est finie, on leur donne une pension modique, ou on leur fait avoir un bénéfice; puis on les congédie. Le peu d'estime qu'on leur accorde, est cause qu'ils négligent leurs élèves; mais comment s'est-on imaginé qu'un mercenaire, pour douze cents francs par an vous formerait un homme? On lui a imposé la tâche la plus difficile et la plus incertaine. D'ailleurs, nemo dat quod non habet." Mercier, Tableau de Paris, pp. 286-287.

[15]André Michel de Ramsey, a Scot who specialized in math and theology and who had previously been governor for the children of the King of England and the duke of Château-Thierry. He published a number of works in both French and English. Malibran, L'Abbé Coyer, p. 17, note 1.

[16]E. J. F. Ozeray, Histoire des pays, château et ville de Bouillon (Luxembourg: Labort, 1827), p. 231.

[17]Malibran, L'Abbé Coyer, p. [illegible].

[18]Ibid., p. 18; Roman d'Amat, ed., Dictionnaire de biographie française, p. 1142; la veuve Duchesne, ed. O.C., p. iii; Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 204.

[19]Czeray, Histoire...de Bouillon, p. 220.

[20]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 19.

[21]"La Principauté (Duché souverein) de Bouillon est enclavée entre les Terres du Duché de Luxembourg, celles de la Principauté de Carignan, celles de la Seignueurie & Abbaye de St.-Hubert, & celle de la Principauté de Sédan." From the time of the Roman domination, the Bouillon territory was passed back and forth between the royalty and the Church, was the bounty of several skirmishes between the Liégeois and the lords of Sédan. After further vicissitudes, the king finally gave the principality to his Grand Chamberlain (Godefroy-Maurice de la Tour, fils de Frédéric-Maurice, & neveu de Vicomte de Turenne /great-grandfather of Coyer's ward/) in 1676. Aubert de La Chesnaye des Bois et François-Alexandre Badier, Dictionnaire de la Noblesse (Paris: Schlesinger, 1773-77), II, 708-709.

[22]Duchesne, ed. O.C., p. iii.

[23]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 10.

[24]E. Lavisse, Histoire générale de la France (Paris: Hachette, 1903-1911), VII, 359; Georges Snyders, La Pédagogie en France au XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), p. 232.

[25]"Paris n'avait pas encore le journal quotidien; revues et gazettes se publiaient avec autorisation spéciale et par conséquent étaient tenues à beaucoup de prudence. Mais la presse politique n'en existait pas moins sous une autre forme. C'était la brochure d'actualité, la chanson, le court pamphlet imprimé sur une feuille volante et qui faisait fureur une semaine. Certaines avaient l'approbation du censeur, la plupart paraissaient sans nom d'auteur ni d'imprimeur et encouraient les foudres du Parlement, de la Sorbonne ou de la police. Foudres mouillées: quand elles tombaient, l'effet était depuis longtemps porté, et l'ouvrage solennellement 'supprimé' ou 'brulé' continuait à circuler sous le manteau, d'autant plus lu qu'on le savait interdit." Pierre Gaxotte, Le Siècle de Louis XV (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1933), p. 300.

[26]Mornet, Origines, p. 117.

[27]Malibran, l'abbé Coyer, pp. 18-19.

[28]Coyer, "Découverte de la pierre philosophale," in Bagatelles morales, [illegible] (Paris: Duchesne, 1758), p. 53; (hereafter referred to as "Découverte").

[29]Coyer admits having borrowed the general idea from Swift, but does not mention that at times, "Découverte" is a verbatim translation of Swift's Infallible Project. Sybil Goulding, Swift en France (Paris: E. Champion, 1928), p. 125.

[30]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, chronological table.

[31]Coyer, Les Masques (s.l.n.d.), title page.

[32]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 1[illegible], note 2.

[33]Bachaumont, Mémoires secrets, 21 juillet 1772, cited in Ibid., p. 56, note 2.

[34]Ibid., p. 3, note 3.

[35]Grimm, Correspondance, I, [illegible]; cited in Ibid., p. [illegible].

Scientific [illegible] in [illegible] the Encyclopédie have long articles on the more technical aspects of the actual exchange or combination of sexual organs, complete with diagrams. Even mémoires like Hardy's Mes loisirs contain rather sensational reports of divorces granted because of hermaphroditism, or upset mothers who discover physical aberrations in their children. Coyer's bienséance however, prevents him from reaching sensationalism, mainly because the oddity was merely a satirical vehicle for criticism of customs and modes of dress, affectations in speech, which he considered unworthy and uncharacteristic of what males and females should be.

[37]Coyer, "l'Année merveilleuse," in Bagatelles, p. 55.

[38]Ibid., p. 65.

[39]Ibid., p. 7[illegible].

[40]"Jamais brochure n'a été lue avec tant d'avidité. Les grands et les petits, les gens d'esprit et des sots, Paris et les Provinces, lui ont fait le même accueil." Fréron, Année littéraire, I, lettre 7, cited in Goulding, Swift en France, p. 126.

[41]Goulding, Swift en France, p. 12[illegible].

[42]Coyer, "La Fagie démontrée," in Bagatelles, p. 104.

[43]Ibid., p. 95.

[44]Ibid., p. 47.

[45]Ibid., p. 104.

[46]Fornet, Origines, p. 42[illegible].

[47]Coyer, Les Masques, p. [illegible].

[48]Ibid., p. 1[illegible].

[49]Not mentioned by Barbier or Quérard, Les Masques was listed under Coyer's name in P. Lacombe's Bibliographie parisienne (Paris: P. Rouquette, 18[illegible]), which gives the usual works such as Bagatelles and Sobieski. He also attributes to him a small pamphlet, Le Cabriolet brisé, ou les Courtauds humiliés (s.l.n.d.), which has neither style nor ideas to suggest Coyer.

[50]Coyer (?), L'Astrologue du jour (à l'observatoire, ce 23 Juin 1746), p. 2.

[51]Ibid., p.7.

[52]Swift and Pope, in Miscellanies, II, 49; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. 112, 115.

[53]Coyer, "Lettre à une dame angloise," in Bagatelles, p. 216.

[54]Charles-Jean-François Hénault, 1685-1770. Received at the Oratoire, then became a magistrate and bought a charge of president in the Parlement de Paris. He lived with le grand monde, and became superintendant of the maison

de la Reine (1726-1728). Hénault was a member of the Académie des Inscriptions and the Académie Française. He was a philosophe, but not a radical one. He wrote poetry, drama, and especially history. Antoire Adam, Le Mouvement philosophique dans la première moitié du XVIIIè siècle (Paris: Société d'Edition d'enseignement supérieur, 1967), p. 259.

[55]Henri Léon, Un Magistrat homme de lettres au XVIIIè siècle. Le Président Hénault (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1903), p. [illegible], cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. [illegible].

[56]"Après le dernier et le troisième refus que j'ai essuyé à l'Académie des Inscriptions, je ne comptais certainement pas aspirer encore: mais quelques-uns de ces Messieurs qui me veulent du bien, voyant deux places actuellement vacantes, veulent absolument me repousser dans l'aventure. Je leur ai répondu que l'Académie m'ayant assez signifié qu'elle ne voulait pas de moi je ne croyais pas qu'il me convint de demander encore; et de fait étant ici avec M. le Duc de Bouillon pour longtemps encore, je ne pourrais pas faire des visites que j'ai déjà tant faites. Mais j'ai ajouté que si l'Académie, sans attendre une nouvelle demande, me faisait l'honneur de jeter enfin les yeux sur moi, j'en serais extrêmement flatté. L'un de ces Messieurs, c'est M. le Président Hénault. Je vous dis mon secret pour en faire tel usage qu'il vous plaira; et je vous le dis par la confiance que vos bontés m'ont toujours inspirée. La double élection s'approche et j'attendrai à Navarre [residence of the dukes of Bouillon] comme le paysan du Danube la décision du sénat." Letter from Coyer to Malesherbes, 31 octobre 1759, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS-N. A. fr. 3347, fo. 143; cited in Malibran, ibid., p. 437.

[57]Voyage autour du monde fait dans les années 1740, 1, 2, 3, 4 par George Anson...commandant en chef d'une escadre envoyée par Sa Majesté Britannique dans la mer du Sud, tiré des journaux et autres papiers de ce seigneur et publié par Richard Walter. Traduit de l'anglais par Elie de Joncourt (Amsterdam & Leipzig: Arkstée et Merkus, 1749), cited in Malibran, ibid., page 103, note 3. This is the same Anson who is St. Preux's travelling companion in La Nouvelle Héloïse.

[58]Mornet, Pensée, p. 59.

[59]Mémoires de Trévoux, avril 1754, p. 1202; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 112.

[60]Coyer, "Découverte de l'isle frivole," in Bagatelles, p. [illegible]. [illegible]

"sophas" and "bijoux". He was surely familiar with two other contemporary criticisms by Crébillon fils and Diderot: Le Sopha (1742) and Les bijoux indiscrets (1748), respectively.

[61] Ibid., p. 169.

[62] Coyer, "Le Siècle présent," in Bagatelles, pp. 35-36.

[63] It is interesting to note the similarity between the Chinese philosophe's name, Foki, and the Old English and Old High German folc, meaning people. Although Coyer is generally not given to obscure allusions and symbolism, this piece is an outstanding exception. Coyer knew English, so it is not unreasonable to seek a parallel here.

[64] Rocquain, l'Esprit révolutionnaire, p. 511.

[65] Again the proximity of Fakir to English faker is too close in sound and meaning to be coincidental, especially regarding a stab at the superstitious religious.

[66] Coyer, "Plaisir pour le peuple," in Bagatelles, pp. 109-110. This episode is reminiscent of Gulliver's problem of how to eat a boiled egg, which ultimately started a religious war. Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 92, note 1.

[67] Coyer, "Plaisir", p. 110.

[68] The Robinhood of eighteenth century France.

[69] Coyer, "Plaisir", p. 111. This method of literary creation by drawing small scraps of paper at random is comparable to that of twentieth century Dadaism.

[70] Ibid., p. 113. Coyer did not realize that his own work was included in this last parody.

[71] Ibid., p. 115.

[72] Ibid., p. 118.

[73] Ibid., p. 120.

[74] In a letter to Malesherbes on 26 July 1759 Coyer shows how he compensates for his disappointment in not being accepted into the Académie des Inscriptions, by turning

towards public service. "Je fais un grand cas de tous les moments de vous faire ma cour; et je croyais que j'en aurais une occasion fréquente par le moyen de l'Académie. Mon peu de mérite ne l'a pas voulu; il faut s'en consoler en travaillant pour le public." Bibliothèque Nationale, N.A. fr., 3347, fo. 153; cited in Malibran, _l'Abbé Coyer_, p. 436.

[75]Coyer, "Dissertation sur la différence de deux anciennes religions, la Grecque et la Romaine", in _Bagatelles_, pp. 28-29.

[76]_Ibid._, p. 29.

[77]Mauzi, _L'Idée du bonheur_, p. 12.

[78]Coyer, "Religions", p. 35.

[79]_Ibid._, p. 42.

[80]_Ibid._, p. 64.

[81]_Ibid._

[82]Coyer, _Dissertations pour être lues: la première, sur le vieux mot de Patrie: la seconde, sur la nature du Peuple_. (La Haye: chez Pierre Gosse junior, 1755), p. 5.

[83]_Ibid._, p. 6.

[84]_Ibid._, p. 41.

[85]_Ibid._, p. 44.

[86]_Ibid._, p. 56.

[87]Coyer, "La Noblesse commerçante", in _O.C._, nouvelle éd. (London et Paris: Duchesne, 1765), II, 5.

[88]Following is a list of publications relative to the quarrel: _La Noblesse commerçante_, Coyer (1756); _La Noblesse militaire, ou le patriote français_, le Chevalier d'Arcq (1756); _Le Citoyen philosophe ou examen critique de la noblesse militaire_, anon. (1756); _Le Commerce ennobli_, Séras (1756); _Le Commerce remis à sa place, réponse d'un pédant de collège aux novateurs politique..._, J. G. Garnier (1756); _La Noblesse_

commerçante ou ubiquiste, J. H. Marchand (1756); La Noblesse militaire et commerçante..., Pézerols (1756); La Noblesse oisive, Rochon de Chabannes (1756); Lettre à l'auteur de la Noblesse commerçante, l'abbé Berthouil (1756); Lettre à M. F. (Fréron) ou Examen politique des prétendus inconvenients de la faculté de commercer en gros sans déroger à sa noblesse, Forbonnais (n.d.); L'Une et l'autre de la noblesse commerçante et militaire, Billardon de Sauvigny (1756); Lettre de M. Dxxx à M. Dxxx au sujet de la noblesse commerçante, l'abbé de la Coste (1756); Considérations sur la noblesse de Bretagne, Pinzon du Sel des Monts (1756); Développement et défense de la noblesse commerçante, Coyer (1757); La Noblesse ramenée à ses vrais principes ou examen de développement de la noblesse commerçante, le Marquis de Pennes (1758); Nouvelles observations sur les deux systèmes de la noblesse commerçante et militaire, Alès de Corbet (1758); La Noblesse telle qu'elle doit être, ou moyen de l'employer utilement pour elle-même et pour la patrie, de la Hausse (1758); Observations sur la noblesse et le tiers-état par Madamexxx, Belot (1758); Réflexions sur la noblesse commerçante, Anon. (1759); Recueil factice, formé par Fontanieu, de pièces sur la noblesse commerçante publiées de 1756 à 1759, avec des tables manuscrites. Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, appendix.

[89]For a study of the nobility of the eighteenth century and a portrait of their precarious state see: Henri Lévy-Bruhl, "La Noblesse de France et la commerce," in Revue d'histoire moderne (1938), pp. 211-212.

[90]Coyer, Noblesse, pp. 213-214.

[91]Coyer, Développement et défense de la noblesse commerçante (Amsterdam & Paris: Duchesne, 1757). This addition to his original stand adds little new material, and is quite redundant from both the point of view of ideas and of style.

[92]Coyer, Lettre au R. P. Berthier sur le matérialisme (Genève: 1799), p. 4.

[93]The translation and the underlining are my own. Ibid.

[94]Ibid., p. 10

[95]In his criticism of l'Apologiste, Coyer returns to his usual exposition of all the ills of the nation in a short amount of space. He treats population, agriculture, the marine, religious orders, maintaining peace and justice, the reduction of luxe and taxes, helping the miserable, abolition of corvées, etc.

[96]Voltaire's Correspondence, ed. Theodore Besterman (Les Délices, Genève: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1958), XXXV, 77, note 4.

[97]Two letters from Coyer to Malesherbes, Bibliothèque Nationale, N. A. fr. 3347, fo. 153 and 143; Malibran, L'Abbé Coyer, pp. 21-22.

[98]This is not to say that Voltaire never spoke against Palissot. On the contrary, he aimed his pen at Palissot just as he did at Pompignan.

[99]"Les Philosophes ne se plaindront pas: mais l'honnêteté publique /i.e., Coyer/ élève la voix pour eux, plus encore pour tant de personnages réellement vicieux & ridicules, dont la licence du Théâtre pourroit faire des bouffons, si l'autorité ne l'arrête." Coyer, Discours sur la satyre contre les philosophes (à Athènes: chez le Libraire Anti-philosophe, 1760), p. 85.

[100]Voltaire wrote to his friend Thieriot on 29 August 1760. "Mais en général, on a pris Palissot trop sérieusement; si ces pauvres philosophes avaient été plus tranquilles, si on avait laissé jouer la pièce de Palissot sans se plaindre, elle n'aurait pas eu trois représentations." Correspondence, XVIII, 84.

[101]Coyer, Satyre, p. 7.

[102]Ibid., p. 73.

[103]Palissot, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de notre littérature, depuis François Ier jusqu'à nos jours (Genève: Montard, 1775), p. 81. Palissot strikes several other jibes at Coyer in "La Dunciade", Œuvres (Liège: Cl. Plomteux, 1777), III, 68-69.

[104]Pottinger, The French Book Trade, p. 79.

[105]Grimm, Correspondance, 15 avril 1761; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. 56-57.

[106]Coyer, O.C., p. vi. The Princess Sobieska was a haughty, jealous woman who felt that she had married beneath her station when she wed first of all Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d'Auvergne, prince de Turenne, brother

of Charles-Godefroy (Coyer's benefactor). She became a widow six days after her wedding, and the following year (1724) married Charles-Godefroy. She always referred to her husband and father-in-law as "deux bourgeois du quai Malaquais". One day, evidently fed up by what she considered dupery, the duchess packed her bags and went to Silesia, where she stayed until her death (1740). Public rumor had it that in 1730, jealous because her lover preferred another, she poisoned the famous actress Adrienne Lecouvreur to get rid of her competition. (Barbier, mars 1730), Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. 442-443.

[107]Jean Fabre, Stanislas-Auguste Poniatowski et l'Europe des lumières (Paris: Collection historique de l'Institut d'études slaves, 1952), XVI, 23.

[108]In his Dissentions des églises en Pologne, Voltaire cited Coyer and some thirty others as sources. Ibid., p. 321.

[109]Coyer gives as general bibliography for his hero mémoires, personal letters, and an eye-witness recounting of war campaigns by a French soldier in the Polish army. Coyer, Histoire de Jean Sobieski, roi de Pologne (Amsterdam: aux dépens de la compagnie, MDCCLXII [sic]), I, viii-x. Regarding the personal letters Coyer said, "Je n'ai trouvé... ni beauté, ni style, ni précision; je n'y cherchois que la vérité; & si avec cette volonté ferme & de tels guides je me suis égaré, déchirons les Histoires." Ibid., pp. ix-x.

[110]R. N. Stromberg, "History in the Eighteenth Century," Journal of the History of Ideas (s.l.n.p., 1951), Xii, 300-301.

[111]His good humor is obvious when he mocks pedants who do useless research: "Kara-Mustapha...s'étoit retiré à Budé." Note 9a: "Capitale du Royaume de Hongrie. On dispute si c'est l'ancienne Aquineum ou étoit la seconde Legion Romaine Adjutrix. Antonin, dans l'exemplaire du Vatican, a écrit Aquineo. Cette Aquineo ou Aquineum, n'est-ce point plutot Cépol sur le Danube? D'autres encore prétendent que ce n'est ni Bude, ni Cépol, mais Strigonie. Ample matière pour une belle dissertation qui ne prouvera rien." Sobieski, II, 343-344.

[112]Lamoignon père wrote to his son from Versailles, 27 février 1761. "Il [le roi] m'a esté parlé de la vie de Sobiescky. Il faut commencer par en arrester la vente.... Il est bien surprenant qu'un pareil livre ayt paru et sans

permission. L'approbation mérite punition. On se plaint beaucoup de cet ouvrage." Bibliothèque Nationale, N. A. fr. 3346, fol. 110. In the meantime, Malesherbes questioned the publisher and Coyer, both of whom wanted a chance to refute questionable sections. Realizing the justice in such a request, Malesherbes wanted to comply. He told this to his father on 1 March, and added that "il est toujours juste de ne point condamner les gens sans les entendre." Ibid., fols. 112-113. A brief but complete account of the story of the suppression of Sobieski appears in Pierre Grosclaude, Malesherbes, témoin et interprète de son temps (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1961), I, 88-89.

[113] Ibid., p. 89, note 18.

[114] Voltaire to Argental on 1 and 3 April and to Damilaville on 6 April 1761, Correspondance, XLV, 252, 256-257, 263.

[115] Mercure de France, Mars 1761, p. 91; Fréron, Année littéraire, mars 1761, pp. 238-240; cited in Malibran, l'abbé Coyer, pp. 310-311.

[116] Grimm, Correspondance, IV, 369; La Harpe, Correspondance littéraire, IV, 47, lettre 177; cited in ibid., pp. 311, 313.

[117] German (1762), English (1762), Russian (1770-1773), and Polish (1852). Cited in ibid., p. 296, note .

[118] Besterman, ed., Voltaire's Correspondence, XLVII, 8.

[119] La Harpe, Correspondance littéraire adressé à S. A. I. Mgr. le grand Duc, aujourd'hui empereur de Russie, et à M. le Comte André Schowalow...depuis 1774 jusqu'à 1789 (Paris: Mignerat, 1801-1807), IV, 48.

[120] La Harpe, ibid.; Bachaumont, cited in Deslandres, Humoriste, pp. 210-211; Moulton to Meister, reported in Voltaire's correspondence, XCVII, lett. 19566.

[121] The allusion to Coyer's writing was concerning the Discours sur la satyre contre les philosophes.

[122] Correspondance, 1 janvier 1766; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 46.

[123]Diderot to Sophie, September, 1767, in Œuvres complètes de Diderot (Paris: Garnier, 1876); cited in ibid., p. 47.

[124]Ibid., p. 55.

[125]Voisenon, Contes légers, suivis des anecdotes littéraires (Paris: 1885), p. 274.

[126]Lapeyre, Les Moeurs de Paris (Amsterdam: Imprimerie de G. Castel, 1747), p. 133.

[127]d'Argenson, VIII, ix and passim; cited in Charles Aubertin, L'Esprit public au XVIIIè siècle (Paris: Didier, 1873), pp. 281-282.

[128]See d'Argens, Thérèse philosophe, passim; or Palissot, Zélinga; Tiphaigne, l'Empire des Zaziris; Luchet, La Reine de Benni, cited in Mornet, Origines, p. 119.

[129]Pierre Clarac, "L'Encyclopédie et les problèmes d'éducation," Annales de l'Université de Paris, numéro spécial, No. I, Oct. 1952 (Paris: Sorbonne, 1952), p. 217.

[130]Alphonse Dupront, Livre et société, p. 169; and Daniel Roche, "Milieux académiques provinciaux et société des lumières," in ibid., pp. 98-99, 101, 104. Roche draws his conclusions from d'Alembert's "Discours préliminaire," the Dictionnaire de Trévoux, Furetière, the Encyclopédie, etc.

[131]Roche, ibid., p. 176.

[132]Mornet, Origines, pp. 146-147.

[133]From about twenty in 1748, to around forty in 1770. Roche, "Milieux académiques provinciaux," p. 96, cites Mornet, ibid., p. 145.

[134]Voltaire, cited in Roche, "Milieux académiques provinciaux," p. 105.

[135]J. Proust, Diderot et l'Encyclopédie (Paris: 1954), p. 521; cited in Roche, ibid., p. 106.

[136]"Discours prononcé dans l'Académie Royale des sciences et belles-lettres de Nancy, par M. l'abbé Coyer, à sa Réception, le Dimanche 8 Mai 1763," in Bagatelles, p. 27.

[137]Aspasie, it is interesting to note, as a real-life friend of Pericles, did not leave a sparkling reputation for being virtuous. Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 213.

[138]Mauzi, L'Idée du bonheur, p. 26.

[139]"Vous accouriez sans nul facheux présage,/De votre Reine éloquent defenseur,/Charmant Abbé, vous qui du persiflage/ Dans la Morale avez montré l'usage /allusion to Bagatelles/ Vous qu'on a vu de Crayons si badins/ Peindre ce Roy fameux par son courage,/ Qui du Croissant abattit les destins,/ Et délivra le rempart des Germains. /allusion to Sobieski/ Nul mieux que vous, d'aimables bagatelles/ N'eut le talent d'enchanter les ruelles;/ Nul mieux que vous, d'un joli vermillon/ N'enlumina la sévere raison./ Par la Déesse orné du don de plaire/ Dans ses états chacun vous considere,/ Chacun vous aime; & j'entends crier/ De toutes parts: place à l'Abbé Coyer!" Palissot, La Dunciade, pp. 68-69. He is mentioned in the following "chant" among the fools who are trying to destroy the real literary masterpieces in the executioner's fire when the flames suddenly lick up their own works and: "l'abbé Coyer expire anéanti." Also in "Chant X" where the Army of Stupidity launches a final attack: "La peur se met au quartier des femelles./ L'abbé Coyer, leur disant des fadeurs,/ En ce moment redoublait leurs vapeurs;/ Et cependant l'apôtre des ruelles/ Même en fuyant s'égayait sur les moeurs." Ibid., cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. 192-193.

[140]Coyer, Nouvelles observations sur Angleterre par un voyageur (Paris: veuve Duchesne, 1779), p. 6.

[141]Voltaire's response to Coyer's request is lost. The fragment of Coyer's letter is tpyically flowery in praise of the man he always admired. "J'ai vu votre portrait dans ce museum à côté de Shakespeare, de Pope et de Saint-Evremond...", Correspondance, LVIII, letter 11796, p. 152.

[142]Ibid.,

[143]J. B. Leblanc, Lettres d'un français (La Haye: chez Jean Neaulme, 1745), I, 219.

[144]Pierre-Jean Grosley, Londres (Lausanne: 1770), II, 239-243; Coyer, Nouvelles observations, p. 250. After posting his qualifications in the main hall, the prospective member had to be approved at ten meetings, and he had to be accepted by two-thirds of the voters. Only two new members were received per year.

[145]Voltaire's Correspondance, 21 novembre LXIII, 115. Other letters say the same thing. See the following: to Jacques Lacombe, ibid., p. 113, 181; to the count and countess d'Argental, pp. 111-112; to Damilaville, pp. 114, 119, 158, 192, 228; to Morellet, p. 127; to d'Alembert, p. 113. Finally he frees Coyer and says that it must have been Charles Bordes who wrote it. See letters to: Bordes, pp. 134, 179; Marmontel, p. 202.

[146]Correspondance, November, 1766; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 30.

[147]Œuvres diverses de J. J. Rousseau, citoyen de Genève (Neufchâtel: 1768), VII; cited in ibid., p. 34 and note 7, appendix.

[148]Voltaire to the marquis de Florian, 12 March 1766, Correspondance, LX, 155.

[149]Voltaire to Etienne Noël Damilaville, 5 March 1766, ibid., p. 145.

[150]De la prédication, pp. 59-60.

[151]Joly, Histoire de la prédication, p. xxi.

[152]See note 257 for Voltaire's prediction, and Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Mémoires secrets, II, 330.

[153]De la prédication, p. 50.

[154]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 364.

[154a]On translating some Latin verse into French prose, Coyer admitted, "Pour le rendre énergiquement en Français il faudrait le traduire en vers; je n'en ai ni le tems, ni le talent." Voyages d'Italie (Paris: veuve Duchesne, 1775), p. 52.

[155]See notes 123, 124 above.

[156]Histoire de France, VII, 366.

[157]Coyer, Etrennes aux morts et aux vivans ou projet utile partout où l'on est mortel (à la vallée de Josaphat: 1768). Moving cemeteries outside the city is also mentioned in Maty, pp. 96-97; Voyage d'Italie, I, 65, 301. In Nouvelles observations sur Angleterre, he found it more healthful to have hospitals and their germs removed to city limits, and in his Plan d'éducation he found it more healthful for the children to be in the fresh air, uncorrupted by city influences. These city-versus-country ideas will be discussed in more detail later. It is unusual that Malibran's study of Coyer never mentioned the Etrennes.

[158]London: 1768.

[159]Mentioned in the inventaire, cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 52.

[160]Ibid., pp. 268, note 2, pp. 279-80, and Weiss, "Coyer," Dictionnaire universelle (Paris: Michaud, 1811-1828, p. 419.

[161]Hornet, Origines, p. 275; Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 158, note 1.

[162]Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, pp. 273-274.

[163]Hornet, Origines, p. 230.

[164]Pons-Augustin Alletz, Dictionnaire des richesses de la langue françoise et du néologisme qui s'y est introduit... (Paris: Saugrain, 1770), passim.

[165]Coyer

[166]Coyer, O.C., p. viii.

[167]Voltaire's Correspondance, XCV, 10.

[168]There are three places which have copies of Coyer's will today: the Archives Departementales de la Seine, [illegible] fol. 3 verso; in the Weiss papers at the Bibliothèque de Besançon (cited in Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 218), and at

the Archives Nationales, cote LXIII, 600, 1f/8/1782, minutier, (cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 50.)

[169]Coyer, Essai sur la prédication, carême entier, en un seul discours (am Mont Sinai et se trouve à Paris: veuve Duchesne, 1781).

[170]Ibid., p. 3.

[171]Ibid., p. 6.

[172]Ibid., p. 13.

[173]Ibid., p. 15.

[174]Letter from Grimm to Frédéric II, on 8 September 1781, "Votre Majesté a pensé me causer une révolution en me parlant de la perte de l'abbé Coyer, que j'ignorais; je n'ai pu éclaircir depuis mon retour si ce malheur est avéré; j'aime à me flatter, et à douter encore..."; cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 44.

[175]Coyer, O.C., p. iv.

[176]Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 201.

[177]Bachaumont, Mémoires secrets, 21 July 1782, cited in ibid., pp. 211-212.

[178]La Harpe to the grand duke Petrovich, cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 45.

[179]Cited in Malibran, l'Abbé Coyer, p. 45.

[180]Notice nécrologique, jan. 1783, cited in ibid., pp. 44-45.

[181]Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 220.

[182]Ibid.

[183]Ibid.

CHAPTER III

SOYER'S LITERARY PHILOSOPHY

The man of letters, says Soyer, is a wise man who employs the tools at his command to perfect his being ("âme"). His appreciation of knowledge in its pure state, which he refers to as "the true and the beautiful", places him beyond the mundane illusions of the ordinary man. Ignoring social standing and family fortune, he owes all to his own capabilities, a power which permits him to "dominer sur les esprits." Those who fulfill these strict and idealistic requirements become more worthy of esteem when their talents, like beauty, are tempered by modesty.[1]

Modesty is an essential element in the character of the author, because it demonstrates his wisdom and his ability to view all, including himself, from an objective point of view. Soyer calls on Socrates as a model of wisdom and modesty.

> "Si je suis plus sage que vous, leur dit-il [Socrate aux Athéniens], c'est en ce que je ne sais rien, je crois ne rien savoir; au lieu que vous, en ne sachant rien, vous croyez tout savoir."[2]

He can be convincingly modest because all writers flatter themselves into believing that theirs will be the great novel, the universal truth, or the government changing

treatise. At times it is true that an author's work is singular in its kind, and at such a time he receives his reward, his nourishment, and his passion: fame ("gloire"). Coyer considers it just for the man of letters, before all others, to stand first in glory, because it was he who drew man out of his barbaric state[3] and into a thinking civilization. He managed to cultivate man. By enlightening him, developing his reason, amusing and correcting him, the man of letters rendered him more sociable and consequently happier.[4]

This same enlightened public which he has formed determines his own fame--"Plus ses /du public/ lumières sont pures, son goût délicat, plus il est sévère."[5] While the public may cover the writer with laurels for his first works, it may also cover the laurels with dust if succeeding works are not of the same quality.[6] But if the works come from the hand of a master, then the doors to glory are open forever.[7] Even glory is of unequal quality, for the fickle public is hesitant to accumulate its praises over a long time. Praise can become pity if imagination is not constant.[8]

There are different kinds of glory. Coyer considers moral glory as important as all others.[9] He includes here the pen which must be sensitive to those against whom it may write. A sage pen assures glory and is more deserving of it than "the tooth of satire" which is ephemeral in its malign pleasure.[10] Coyer, like Montaigne, found wisdom in

moderation. Both Molière and Aristophanes, two of Coyer's preferred authors, wrote without offending, or corrected themselves when they became aware of what harm they could do.[11] But even mesure and modesty do not always assure glory. How can the author design his own entry into fame? Will he ever be able to draw himself out of the crowd of mediocrity which the public does not tolerate?[12] This fatiguing uncertainty[13] plagues him, and creates a literary courage necessary for endurance, or else beats him into the fearful ranks of the forgotten.

Coyer, doubtlessly observing his own plight and depicting his own fears and anxieties, sought consolation in history and rationalizations. Why, Coyer reassured himself rhetorically, even Milton died unknown and unappreciated.[14] This lack of recognition attested to the public's poor judgment more than to the indolence of Milton's muses. Seneca, he recalls, was formed "dans l'honnête médiocrité,"[15] and yet became one of the greatest authors of all time. He continues to soothe his own wounds. "C'est cependant la médiocrité qui est le partage le plus ordinaire des esprits." One has only to witness how many plays succeed and then fail in a few days, to view this widespread characteristic, and to understand the bitterness on the part of the author for having tried at all.[16] Realizing his struggles and hardships, it is easier to appreciate his formation and to feel that even mediocrity is not without merit.[17]

His mediocrity explains in part the derivation of and the need for literary courage. He must have the courage to laugh at himself when others laugh at him, and likewise when he intends to place those about whom he writes in a laughable or ridiculous situation.[18] Still more courage, mixed with sacrifice, is necessary when the author contemplates his financial situation. Coyer considers it much easier to compete with all others in seeking charges, riches, and honorable positions, than to ignore the vulgar desires and devote himself to producing a good book.[19] His heart must remain closed to the seductions of fortune.

> "...s'...exclure /de la fortune/ par choix, par l'envie unique de perfectionner sa raison & celle des autres, c'est l'effort d'une ame élevée."[20]

Neither fortune nor indigence aids the writer. Burning only towards wealth and position warps the pen, while indigence wrenches it from his hand and extinguishes the fire of imagination when he searches for the necessities of his simple existence.[21]

Simplicity should be a keynote regarding both his desires and his style. Singlemindedness of aim in life will allow him the necessary solitude of his study and unwavering devotion to his work. Simplicity in writing becomes a duty to his reading public, who must understand in order to learn. For the true aim of all authors is to instruct the public, insists Coyer.[22]

The abbé joins many other duties to this one, and he personally accepts the responsibilities which fall upon

every man of letters. He refers to the savant buried in his works, as a diamond in the rough.[23] This man is charged with devoting his talents to being a good citizen. Aside from the general responsibilities such as enlightening, perfecting, and amusing his readers, there are also specific duties which the author must assume. It is up to him to correct vices and demonstrate good morality.[24] He must accept the responsibility for clarity, and for allusions he makes to other people. That also includes the light in which the public will accept these allusions and its ultimate reaction to them,[25] (e.g., Palissot's Les Philosophes). Coyer frequently found his contemporaries so recondite in their allusions that even they were not sure what they wanted to say.[26] The homme de lettres must learn to be a good critic of his times as well as of other writers.

While some authors heap praises upon the heads of all their fellow writers, good or bad, others find sadistic pleasure in tossing another author into the arena for public amusement. Having felt the sharp teeth of the critics in his own flesh, Coyer asks,

> "A quoi sert...de cultiver son âme, de la remplir de lumières & de sentimens, si l'on n'en devient pas meilleur, si ce n'est que pour se jetter avec plus de méchanceté sur ses propres frères?"27

Hence, criticism tempered by justice and human understanding is the quality he needs.

A knowledge of nature, both physical and human, is fundamental. Without this, the theater, history, "la morale"

will all ring falsely, and his readers will scoff at him. With this knowledge, there will be order and merit, and he will be useful to mankind.[28]

If the man of letters is able to fulfill all his duties, he will achieve eloquence, diversity and utility of subject matter, and will receive his rewards. Coyer charges all hommes de lettres:

> "Détachez-vous de la fortune; aimez la gloire, armez-vous de courage; connoissez la Nature, les tems & le monde. Avec ce coeur et cet esprit, vous aurez des succès éclatans dans le genre de Littérature que vous aurez choisi; peut-être dans plusieurs, peut-être dans tous."[29]

But this promise of success delivered in a tidy formula is less convincing when the abbé places the writer in his plysical environment and recounts the tribulations which habitually plague him, especially if he is among the mediocre majority. It would be natural to suspect that the latest hike in the price of paper might tend to slow down the output of "ces misérables auteurs qui ont la rage d'écrire parce qu'ils ont celle de la faim."[30] This is not the case at all, for the public is constantly inundated by poor quality works which say less about their good quality than about good business for the colporteurs.[31] Coyer has no sympathy for the writer whose stomach controls his pen while his heart and his esprit stand idly aside. He harshly chastises them for throwing away their time and their sleep on useless ditties to bring in a few coins, when they might spend these

same efforts on some project for the health and wellbeing of man.[32] On the other hand, Coyer can easily sympathize with the philosophe who was scorned by the rich and famous because of the cruel separation which gold made between them. How sad to think that only in death will these indigent creators stand equally with those whose fat purses will no longer be of any use, and with those whose worldly influence has suddenly become nullified by their disappearance.[33] There is no room for gold, display, titles or positions in the life of the dedicated man of letters. If he takes his work seriously, there will be no place for him in glittering society, for he will appear nude in his honesty before a group that recognizes only facades and pretenses. His image may not even have changed by the middle of his career because it takes both time and talent to produce a figure which causes heads to turn and voices to say, "There he is!"[34]

It is up to the writer himself to make his name known and to separate himself from the hordes of unknowns. He must not look behind himself to see those he has had to step on to arrive at his ultimate goal. There is a darwinian struggle among writers as there is among men in business or government.[35]

A combination of time and talent produce a worthy literary contribution. To become really well known, a writing first passes among the salons and in social circles. If only a few have read it and can discuss its merits, the

others soon blush at their ignorance and hasten to find a copy. The press turns out more editions. It appears abroad and is translated into foreign tongues.[36] Here Coyer has traced the steps of accumulating popularity which lead towards his much desired _gloire_. Once launched, there are still pitfalls to be aware of. By this he means the enlightened public and the _gens de lettres_ who will eventually decide the fate of his work. Meanwhile the author awaits the outcome in his _cabinet_, isolated as much as possible from all save his inspirations. He must keep himself apart from the public, accept its decision, and profit from the criticism he receives. If his work has passed these tests, the man of letters is well on his way towards earning the reward of fame which will be the aliment to start him off on further endeavors.

The author's fight for _gloire_ is the selfish aspect of his goals in writing. He is allowed this bit of egotism because of the sacrifices he makes and the rigorous ideals he maintains. Coyer has always seen punishment and reward for performance as an integral part of life and of justice, for individuals, laws, societies, & governments. Glory is his aim, and his reward. The author must be concerned with his own fame, because it is largely he who controls it, by sticking to the duties he must perform. If his nourishment does not come immediately, he still dreams that a future generation will recognize his merit and further his renown

even after his death.[37] There is usefulness in the praises he receives. The more the people respect and honor the writer, the more they listen to what he has to say.[38] Then, he is more powerful and more able to fulfill the altruistic aspect of his goals in life: to be useful; to instruct. A writer wastes his lumières if he does not use them to a didactic end.[39]

Everything that Coyer wrote was useful and instructive: The Bagatelles showed moral weaknesses to be corrected, Plan d'éducation set up an institution for instruction, Etrennes was concerned with health, Jninki with correcting governmental abuses. Since all of his work was "useful", he never understood why starving authors could not provide for their support in a similar way. Duty to one's country must be the first of all aims. While Coyer remained celibate throughout his life, and was not even wed to the Church as is generally expected of an abbé (a title and fundamental religious core which he never abandoned), his ideal spouse was certainly his country; he never deceived her. On the other hand, one can say that, rigorous as he was in abiding by his standards, Coyer was frequently deceived by those for whom he was writing.

This deception probably explains why the abbé did not have much faith in public opinion, although he did respect the power it wielded for success or failure. He saw the public as an author's menace. Not at all tolerant of the

mediocre man of letters, the public vacillated in its desires, therefore in what it considered good or bad. (It hesitated much too long between Pradon and Racine when trying to pick a favorite Phèdre.) Its taste was questionable. (When it found the Misanthrope unpalatable, Molière was forced to run Le Médecin malgré lui on the same bill to secure himself of an audience.) The public is capricious. It applauds and hisses the same author with abandon. Only the "enlightened" public is capable of judging honestly and adequately.[40] Since the literatur is conscious of the whims of the public, it is up to the author himself to choose his topic carefully and his style so as to outwit those who will erect barriers between him and his goals.

His own favorite topic was France. Not only chauvinistic for his country, he also favors his own century above preceding ones. Authors may still find models for eloquence in the ancients, but the aptitude now no longer for praising to deprecate contemporary writers and use the success of the seventeenth century authors as weapons to punch the eighteenth century.[41]

Preferring his century to another does not mean that Cover was blinded to the literary weaknesses of his own. As in any epoch, if one eliminated three-quarters of all existing books, the quarter that remained would still need pardon.[42] The mass of worthless publications which inundates the public every day is of little consequence, because such works will pass from sight as quickly as they appeared.[43]

The works which remain will be strong enough to defend themselves. Their authors will have written with a purpose, they will have armed their pieces with reason, the defense par excellence--even against philosophes.[44] Reason based on a thorough knowledge of physical and human nature will lead to the understanding of man, his needs, his passions, vices, virtues, his freedom, and his learning.[45] There is no force greater than wisdom and knowledge.

The strength of the lasting books will be based on their clarity, eloquence, universality and purity. It is not important if eloquence is modeled after the ancients, for "imiter, c'est...remonter."[46] The ancients themselves used their masters as models and developed an originality and importance of their own. Universality is a product of truth and honesty. Variation in genres and style does not mar a universal truth. A taste of laughter[47] and humor renders a work more enjoyable. Purity in language is an unquestionable necessity, according to Cover. He extended this purity to other languages as well as his own. Although he realized that all other nations looked towards France for literary masters and ideals, he resented the incursion of French into other tongues and considered it destructive, (e.g., Vicino < Vésin, Correggio < Corrège, London < Londres). Adapting Italian or other names and places to French pronunciation and spelling was nonetheless an evil he tolerated and to which he always conformed.

There were other literary traits which he criticized and did not tolerate. However, he slipped into these same weaknesses himself more often than he would have liked to admit. In the same pamphlet in which Coyer admonishes an author for having too many topics in one writing,[40] the abbé falls prey to his own criticism. He informs Berthier that his choice of truths to prove a point is quite handy indeed, for he has totally left aside the existing facts which would disprove his theory.[41] Coyer should have thought about that when he was writing De la prédication. (One should dominate the uncontrollable desire to say something new about an already worn-out topic.[42] Coyer rarely broke this rule, and when he did, he rationalized his attempt rather efficaciously (e.g., his travel literature). He was also occasionally pedantic.

Coyer's pedantry was generally confined to his allusions and his source material and was not overbearing. His reading audience was among the educated, well-read and enlightened. They were familiar with the ancients he cited. Coyer was generous to his readers by indicating his bibliography to them in the preface and in footnotes of every scholarly work he wrote (cf., Deux anciennes religions, la Grecque et la Romaine; Sur le vieux mot de Patrie:...sur la nature du Peuple; la Noblesse commerçante and the Défense: Sobieski; Plan d'éducation). He was also interested in telling them about his methodology in the various publications.

Methodology, he believed, should always begin at the very beginning, that is, it should trace the development of the topic, or the word, from its birth up to the stage which the author will treat, (e.g., Sobieski). The facile way is not to be shunned, for it is often the easiest to understand.[51] In technical works, such as those involving statistics which are either conflicting or unobtainable, Coyer suggests moderation and under-calculation rather than misrepresentation through possibly unrealistic or exaggerated figures.[52] He is not against positing an intelligent guess after careful study of the existing facts.[53] Methodology must conform to the subject treated. A synthesis can be new and daring although the author uses materials and/or ideas already suggested by others. A synthesis is often a good jumping-off point for exciting and adventurously imaginative studies.[54] (Coyer's Plan d' éducation was one of the most modern and advanced studies in the problem of an entire educational system.) In discussing his methodology of how to criticize, Coyer offers reproaches for what not to do, instead of suggesting something more positive.

Regarding criticism as a genre, Coyer's cardinal rule is kindness. Do not use satire; to not offend.[55] The purpose of criticizing should be beneficial, not destructive. Grimm, Diderot, and Bachaumont must have chuckled as they read this suggestion, for each one had brutally directed his venom against this author in just the manner condemned.

As for other genres, such as history or the theater, Coyer was more precise.

In comparison to the Italian theater, Coyer found the French theater grossly underdeveloped in the sixteenth century, with its farces and mystères which continued until the following century.[56] While traveling in England, he also saw a branch of theater which interested him for incorporation in France. This was a light entertainment in small theaters devoted to farces, marionettes, pantomime, and "tours de force et d'adresse" especially suitable for the "petit peuple", one of the abbé's constant interests.[57] Not far removed from the simplicity of this people's theater, is the example theater which Coyer imagined for the amusement of the Patagonian giants. He would have an opera of: nature, agriculture, conjugal bliss, friendship, devotion to one's country, heros, and nearly everything else which he habitually criticized as needing improvement in France. Once again, he showed literature as instructive. Tragedy would show, for example, the punisement of the strong who wanted to tyrannize the weak. Comedy would be a good-natured, slapstick farce.[58]

At the same time, Coyer sketched out what such a comedy might be like. While he admitted openly that he had no talent for verse, this model comedy is ample evidence as to why he never attempted any plays. It is a simplistic scene between a giant (Patagonian) and a dwarf (an ordinary

man). The giant woman ridicules the smaller man who plays the fool in all situations. The woman is the aggressor, the one who deals the blows, proposes humorous escapades, and who finally saves the man from danger by tucking him neatly under her arm and fleeing.[59] This is in no way different from his other fantasies about the reversal of the male and female roles in society. There is a second sketch which he proposes between an ordinary man and a baby giant. Similar to the first sketch, the dwarf falls into puddles, gets angry, and is slapped around by the one of superior size and abilities.[60] Comedy should not be an injurious satire like Palissot's Les Philosophes, which is made of only the foam or shell of real comedy.[61] The abbé prefers situations from which moral and other lessons can be cleaned.

Coyer sees the drame or the comédie larmoyante as the ideal didactic vehicle. He finds the theater wasted for a large part, because it should be open for the enjoyment and edu[illegible] of the people as well as the rest of the public.[62] Another level of entertainment of the drame, with the same purpose, would be in school, performed by masters and students. What better way to demonstrate proper mores and active virtue?[63] Visual reinforcement in educational techniques has only recently been incorporated in the twentieth century. This is one example of how Coyer was in the vanguard of his century's ideas. Whereas he never put his own ideas

to work for him in the realm of the theater, it was just the opposite in history.

Rarely did a publication of Coyer's appear that did not have an important section devoted to the history of a country, a man, a word, a concept, or an idea. Coyer agrees with Sully that the contemporary historian fills his pages with petty details, useless stupidities, and wasted descriptions. The historian is quick to tell of the cannons, mines, and sausages in a certain city, and considers this essential, but neglects to depict the development of industry or government, or the establishment of a colony. A history should enrich the country's literary resources while doing justice to its most important assets.[64] The historian plays a role even more important than the artist or the sculptor. The latter places a famous man concretely, but statically in the eyes of his admirers. The historian can show many faces, moods, and actions which will endure through the centuries, while marble chips and paint cracks away.[65] When the abbé wrote his history of Sobieski and Poland, he hastened to inform his readers of historiographical details to prove his sound methodology.

Coyer gave the carefully chosen sources he used, their background, their accuracy, and did all he could to show what the role of the good historian was.

> "Ainsi l'Historien, sans être obligé de deviner en trompant la postérité, après s'être trompé lui-même, n'a qu'un soin, celui de choisir de bons mémoires."[66]

He must limit himself to what he knows, and ignore all the rest, no matter how entertaining it may be. Here, dealing with the works of others in order to glean information and truth, the historian must learn first of all to doubt. Once the truth is apparent, he must learn that objectivity and honesty follow immediately in importance. There must be neither partiality for a nation, nor blind admiration for a hero. It is his duty to report the good and the bad alike.[67] It was easy for Coyer to formulate rules of historiography, methodology, or to state what the ideal author or literature should be like, because he quite naturally drew up these outlines according to what his own practices were.

Stating regulations and setting up models served several purposes for the abbé. If he made them after his own techniques, then he could always stick to the formulae with ease. In so doing, he always felt that his work was well done, and worthy of attention. Not only was he attending to his duty as one who must instruct, but he was also enveloping himself in solid psychological insulation in order to protect himself from the onslaught of those critics who perpetually wounded him. There are no easier rules to live by than one's own. He needed reinforcement from his fellow authors.

Painfully aware that his works would never be of the caliber of Voltaire's, Montesquieu's or Rousseau's, Coyer honestly gave his self-evaluation in his acceptance speech

to the Académie de Nancy. Merit in mediocrity, the frustration of public rejection, the tyranny of the critic, the stupidity of the public were topics that reappeared throughout the speech. He was grateful for his entry into the company of famous literary names. He hoped that this acceptance would raise his esteem and that here he would find protection from his enemies. His self-denigration, although typically honest and purgative, must have reaped more pity than admiration. Coyer made it clear that the frustration and uncertainty which were a part of the life of the second- or third-rate author were a part of his own existence. He considered himself a philosophe in every aspect of the term. He felt able and called upon to protect and defend his fellow philosophes. But with the deep-rooted sense of justice and equality which he exhibited in all he wrote, he could not understand why everyone did not jump to his defense as he did to theirs.

Duty, justice and equality were only a few of the traits which had been instilled in the abbé. The Church and his up-bringing had strongly shaped his philosophy of life. Had Coyer remained a practicing religious, he would have been a zealous one, because his singlemindedness of purpose would have directed him solidly into the priestly path. Instead, for tangential personal reasons as well as the unity and simplicity of his aims, he devoted every aspect of his life to being a model writer. His call for duty,

sacrifice, courage, isolation, devotion, knowledge, and humanity are all ideals ear-marked by a discipline emanating from his sincere, religious formation. This same training had a parallel, accompanying spring of action, necessary to put the other characteristics to work.

The abbé Coyer was modest in his desires, his appearance, and his personality, but bold once he took his pen in hand. An author could comfortably be modest because he always felt he was right. He could be bold for the same reason. Coyer's pen became a sword when he fought for his government, his country, and its people. He felt capable of defending the philosophes because he was one of them. He was bold on the offensive as well. He attacked abuses, moeurs, religion and personal enmity. It was in his writing that Coyer vicariously lived the kind of life he would have liked to enjoy personally.

In his publications appears a charming personality, who delights and entertains the women while vivaciously discussing and arguing with the men. He has lady-friends with whom he corresponds and who are interested in the slightest thing he does during an average day. His gentlemen companions are well-read, well-traveled scholars whom he knows intimately, and whose names alone cause ears to take notice. Although in reality he had made acquaintances such as Voltaire, Rousseau, the président Hénault, and attended salons, royal houses, and academic banquets, the famous

men were not wild with admiration, the salons tolerated rather than encouraged his presence, and at a banquet of philosophes in London, he was too timid to raise his glass and make a toast honoring the French ambassador.[68]

The writers whom he knew the best were those who had been dead since ancient times, or his contemporaries who had been widely published. In the privacy of his personal library in his apartments at the Louillon residence, Coyer was intimately familiar with Homer, Virgil, Cicero, Tasso and Plutarch, as well as with Milton, Montaigne, Molière, Montesquieu, and especially Voltaire, whom he considered the single universal genius of his century.[69] In such illustrious company Coyer was prepared to be bold, confident, and to have a rather high opinion of himself.

He felt qualified to undertake the difficult tasks of his profession because he was worthy of it. He was a member of the clergy, the first estate, classes above the nobility and the people. He had lain prostrate at the feet of the Pope, in no less dignified a position than kings and emperors who had occupied the same place before him.[70] He felt capable of taking up where others had left off, of succeeding where they had failed,[71] of creating new and useful things, of bettering his century.

Because he was a minister of God, Coyer was qualified to point out the moral weaknesses of the people. He could see the:

> "vanités dans vos généalogies, dans vos titres, dans vos prétentions, dans les adulations qu'on vous prodigue, dans vos richesses,...fêtes,... votre luxe..."[72]

Therefore he could stand aside after observing them and rightfully call them "avare, désespéré, lourd, emporté, prude, coquette", etc.[73]

Coyer was not afraid to jeopardize his own position. He attacked false protectors. On the day of his reception into the Académie des Arcades, he irately threatened to report to the French ambassador in Rome the insult he received when a young poet showed France humiliated at the feet of a victorious England, in a poem he read.[74] And wherever he traveled, Coyer the author was proud to present copies of his publications to the dignitaries he visited.[75] He was not reluctant to criticize the poor taste of the same reading public which judged his works. Because he wanted his criticism to be effective, he fought an eye for an eye against the author of l'Ami des hommes, and put aside flowery sucreries to hurl "brusque evangelical thunderbolts" when the sinner was to know that he was in the wrong.[76] Coyer's verbal bravery, however, was often only superficially persuasive. He was more convincing when he administered self-criticism, for his weaknesses were all too apparent to him, and his fundamental honesty compelled him to hide nothing.

In this respect Coyer was his own historian, for he pointed out his bad sides as readily as the good ones. An undercurrent of lack of self-confidence shows up throughout

the abbé's career. The most obvious swallowing of his pride, combined with disappointment and yet perserverance is in several letters he wrote to Malesherbes regarding the Académie des Inscriptions. He had petitioned and failed three times to gain entrance. In his own words he stated that it was obviously his lack of merit which had kept him out. However, if, finally, the members of this organization would come to him with an invitation, then he would be honored to accept such a kindness.[77] It never happened. Less disappointing was his successful attempt to become a member of the Royal Academy of London, although he again belittled his worthiness to sit beside such savants.[78] There is a certain amount of boldness and courage in admitting one's failures publicly.

Coyer's translation of Blackstone failed to the extent that his publisher refused to put it in his Œuvres complètes. The abbé regretted this failure especially, because he felt the French government could profit from a study and comparison of England's criminal code. Coyer felt that he never got his ideas across to his readers here, [illegible] Noblesse commerçante, and in all his criticisms on the corrupt mores of his generation. De la prédication is dedicated almost entirely to the inefficacious attempts to convince the public that it was sinful. Furthermore, all preachers from the beginning of time had failed just as he had. Although Coyer felt the public had treated him unjustly

by giving him his coveted "gloire" only to snatch it away a few years later, and that several critics were far too harsh in their criticism, he was still aware of his own weaknesses.

In Pierre philosophale the author does not try to hide the fact that the ideas are not his own.[79] He makes no claims for originality in his educational synthesis, and prefers to quote another author directly if he feels that he cannot improve on the phraseology or ideas.[80] Coyer accepts the responsibility for lack of clarity in his Noblesse commerçante,[81] for he feels that that is surely what caused so many retorts which resulted in the querelle de la Noblesse commerçante. And he rightfully effaces himself before the towering and impressive image of Montesquieu, one of his contemporary literary heros.

> "Mort [le M.] qu'on ne sauroit trop pleurer: quelle est la classe de l'Etat, quelle est la Nation qui n'ait pas perdu l'ami de la lumière du genre humain? Quatre lignes de ce grand homme auroient fait plus d'impression que toutes les pages que j'écris."[82]

Admissions like the preceding require a healthy dose of honesty on the part of the person who is exposing his own faults and weaknesses.

Honesty was a fundamental building block in the composition of Gabriel François Coyer. He was adamantly honest. To clear himself of a false accusation that Voltaire had made in attributing the anti-Rousseau Pansophe letters to Coyer, the abbé immediately wrote to Jean-Jacques' publisher

stating that whenever he wrote, he always used his own name, or remained anonymous, never casting blame on others for what was his own.[83] Coyer felt that it was an especially important duty for an author not to deceive the public, even if the audience might punish him for being too honest.[84] He sometimes felt tempted to omit or rearrange what the readers did not want to hear, but when the time came to put it down on paper, he always conveniently forgot.[85] The historian must be both objectively and brutally honest or he is deceiving himself as well as those who read him.[86] Next to honesty, and standing above all other of Coyer's qualities and characteristics, was the call he felt to serve his country.

There were very few things which Coyer wrote that did not have to do primarily with devotion to his country. Even in his travel literature on England, Italy and Holland, he never missed a chance to point out where France had something better, or where he lacked something which he could not obtain in the foreign country. Coyer was adamant in insisting that love of, and duty to one's country must be the first requirement of all authors.[87] Every writer should feel the responsibility to encourage good citizenship.[88] This nationalism and chauvinism were mixed with an unsurprising altruism.

On several occasions, especially during his travels, Coyer demonstrated mercy and kindness as he turned the other

cheek to people who had done him wrong. In Italy he requested mercy for a thief who had run off with his funds.[90] Another time he begged for a lessening of sentence for one who had deceived him at a tourist attraction in Holland.[91] At a third event, Coyer, more than middle-aged, got out of his coach which was being led by an old and unwell Italian in a very bad rain-storm, insisting that the old driver take his place in the carriage while the abbé himself led the vehicle the remainder of the distance into the next town.[92] Coyer's walking the extra mile was not uncharacteristic of his nature or of his position.

Priestly demonstrations were usually more verbal than active with the abbé. There was a definite evolution from the man of the world towards the religious in Coyer's life, but the curve, while rising sharply as he aged, plummeted to the bottom of the graph in his testament in what appears to be the depths of disillusionment. He was constant in his belief in original sin. This probably explains his overwhelming sense of responsibility.[93] He occasionally found it convenient to boast that the clergy was the first Estate, although he usually referred to himself as an "abbé... sans abbaye".[94] His credo was reduced to one deistic sentence:

> "Contentons nous de démontrer à nos Eleves,
> que Dieu existe, que le Monde est son ouvrage,
> qu'il le gouverne par sa puissance & sa sagesse,
> que le bien vient de lui, & le mal de nous."[95]

If any further explanation were necessary, Coyer referred the questioner to "La Henriade": "Dieu t'a fait pour l'aimer;

& non pour le comprendre."[96] Anything coming from the hand of God must be accepted on faith, unquestioningly: dogmas, miracles, doctrine. But it is necessary to doubt and purge what is superstitious or superficial.[97] Coyer never offered any rules for distinguishing between the acceptable and the doubtful. In fact, he found some superstitions useful for the peuple, as did Voltaire. Coyer began to demonstrate a Montaigne-like moderation in how many miracles he felt one could accept.[98] During his trip to Italy, he also found it trying to see so many Madonnas in such a short period of time.[99] His own beliefs and his attachment to the clergy never caused the slightest hesitancy on his part when he found something to criticize.

Once again the good historian considered it necessary to report the bad side of what he saw as well as the good. Coyer listed evil popes who had plunged Christendom.[100] He pointed out how the superstitious practices of monasteries drained not only Italy's funds, but also sapped the lifeblood from her future by condemning her youth to the froc only to see them spend useless, inactive lives. They should have been mothers and fathers, increasing the population and adding to the nation's wealth and happiness.[101] Coyer was against the Jansenists because they brought much error and useless subtleties into religion.[102] He was against the useless religious ceremonies whose only purpose was to arouse passion.[103] The superficial processions so abundant in Italy

contributed nothing to the bettering of her mores.[104] Coyer's frequent doubts place him solidly in the deistic camp. If the Emperor Augustus received the announcement of the birth of the son of God from the Oracle of Delphi, why did not someone keep the "autel au premier né de Dieu"?[105] This doubt becomes more serious when Coyer's realistic nationalism opposes his religious faith. Replacing the statue of Joan of Arc at Orléans should be a concern for all of France, he stated; "puisqu'enfin cette fille (soit miracle, soit stratagème politique) a tant contribué à sauver le royaume."[106] His questioning and his deism are at times quite worldly. One wonders how much of this was conformity with his fellow philosophes, or a simple expediency of the moment.

Precise unpriestly examples surprise the reader who is expecting model opinions and behavior. The abbé seems to take pleasure in procrastinating in his holy attitudes. He believed that devotion came with age.[107] He said he did not make the pilgrimage to a certain holy site because he could pray as well from afar as from up close. He admitted that he would only have seen a grotto. He continued, regarding a miracle which took place there,

> "Cette pieuse fable, détruite depuis long-temps, est encore une vérité pour le peuple; heureusement elle ne sçaurait lui nuire."108

The culmination of the abbé's displeasure with the Church, because he felt that a lifetime of genuine efforts had been

completely ignored and unappreciated, appeared in his Testament. Forgetting the "do unto others" commandment, Coyer said, "I leave nothing to the Church, which gave me nothing,"[109] a very mundane opinion, as though he had expected material gifts from the hand of God.

Materially, Coyer had been comfortably situated during his entire life. As a child, he had a "nourrice" and a servant, who spent a lot of time with him.[110] He was always assured of an apartment with the Louillon family. His wardrobe was ample. He had his own transportation, cook and manservant.[111] He also traveled with a valet.[112] In fact, one of the reasons he was anxious to return home quickly from his voyages, was that he wanted to get back to his "cabinet" and his friends.[113] His life was comfortable, but simple.

Coyer always enjoyed the pleasures of life in moderation. He smoked enough to be annoyed when the customs official confiscated his tobacco.[114] He preferred good wine to eau-de-vie, and complained to his imaginary correspondant of the poor quality of Italian cooking and bread.[115] He was also displeased with poor traveling conditions he had to endure.[117] For the most part, Coyer preferred to travel as economically as possible. He saved money by eating table d'hôte at inns like any merchant, and profited by learning more about customs and mores to which he was not accustomed.[118] Not too keen on excessive tipping, the abbé did not mind

being generous to his own servants, and buying curios and souvenirs to take back home.[119] He also traveled in moderate circles in France. His dress indicates the kind of society he frequented. Coyer attended and was familiar with Parisian salon life and a gentleman's etiquette.[120] His social graces were not rusting. While he enjoyed watching others dance if they did it well, he was most often rather bored at balls.[121] His worldliness was not confined to his activities and dress.

There was a worldly side to the abbé's ideas and anecdotes at times, that tends to surprise, even shock, with its amorously satyric. On numerous occasions he described statues in Italy with a sensual delight.[122] He appreciated Magdaleine's physical beauty, but felt that the sculptor should have depicted her as old and worn.[123] He admired Saint Charles Borromée more for his beauty, than for his heavenly qualities.[124] As a shock, he felt the nudity in Italian sculpture was carried a bit far, and was often used in religious areas where modesty would have been more appropriate.[125] On the other hand, he delighted in looking at the pretty girls in the street.[126] One can almost see the grin on his face when he recounts a shocking anecdote about chasing the prostitutes out of Florence, and then calling them back again.[127]

Following a description of what he refers to as "le monde réel", he states:

> Les premiers hommes n'ont vu que le Monde physique: l'action vivifiante du Soleil, le jour & les ténebres, le cercle des saisons, la fécondité inépuisable de la terre, les eaux qui l'arrosent & la pénetrent, les hommes & les autres animaux qui naissent à sa surface pour mourir, comme les feuilles & les fruits pour tomber."[128]

Here is rousseauistic pathetic fallacy, downgrading man to the glory of nature; tracing the history of man stressing his impotence before omnipotent physical surroundings. This unusual burst of pre-romanticism emanating from a realistically oriented, if not stodgy, writer is unexpected and makes one wonder whether he were wrong in his self-depreciation regarding poetry.

Another facet of Coyer's relationship with the real world was more humorous. He realized the value of lightness of spirit and style to maintain the reader's interest. There was slapstick humor in the anecdote in which one of the dignitaries who met the Pope along with Coyer on Christmas day, fell on his face because he was not accustomed to the ceremonies.[135] More surprising were his anecdotes regarding the deflowering of a maiden,[136] and another story whose humor depended on fecal matter.[137] He handles both tactfully. Some attempts at humor fail utterly, and only serve to reinforce the Baronne d'Holbach's opinion that Coyer was "miel de Narbonne tourné." Always on the lookout for interesting and unusual anecdotes to report, the abbé often leaves aside lightness and, like so many others in his century, turns towards graveyard humor, and morbid or sory tales.

"If I had found the golden oar," he wrote, "I would have descended into hell to find more news for you. But I guess you'll have to be content with Vergil's description of it."[132] And another time he said laughingly, "I had hoped that Vesuvius would give us a few minor eruptions just to liven up the visit [illegible] it."[133] Joyer seemed to enjoy collecting epitaphs.

> "Vie juste brave honneur:
> si dessin bonne, abile."

And for the poet Gay:

> "La vie n'est qu'un jeu, tout le prouve.
> J'en ai ainsi que je le soupçonnais,
> Lorsque j'en jouissais.
> A présent, j'en suis certain."[134]

Within two pages of description of Naples, the abbé lists four violent historical deaths commemorated by funereal monuments.[135] Admiring the crucifix at the Gerdese palace in Rome, he recounts that Michelangelo was said to have nailed a man to a cross in order to have real suffering to copy.[136] The most surprising moment of all is one which Joyer labels as "un trait d'humanité [illegible] de sagesse dans la législation."[137] Here he witnesses the execution of a carriage driver who had killed his wife.

> "Le bourreau, armé d'une massue, [illegible] d'un couteau, le frappe à la tempe, l'assomme, se jette sur lui, le saigne, le coupe par morceau, qu'il suspend à des crochets."[138]

Joyer considered this an effective execution because it chilled the blood of the spectator while impressing upon him

the lesson not to kill, and yet the guilty man suffered nothing. It was by citing examples of what he saw in other countries and considered good or bad, helpful or ridiculous, that Cayer hoped to criticize his own country or plant seeds of betterment.

He also used more direct methods for presenting ideas for reform. Indicative of his methodology are the several outlines that Cayer presented strictly as such, or lightly disguised by fiction. The fact that his ideas are here in skeletal form suggests a personality not unsure of itself, but less imaginative than a Voltaire or a Beaumarchais, who gave substance to their ideas. _La Table de Cornemante_ lays the groundwork for a useful, money-making class. Its obvious weaknesses appear in the quarrel that followed. The _Lettre au Docteur Waty_ sets forth an imagined people, their government, city, and entertainments. Collecting gold for the nation's treasury, in _Pierre philosophale_, is the most original and amusing outline, but its creator is Swift and not Cayer. _Strenness_, in successful voltairian irony discusses the question of municipal health and suggests the need to place cemeteries outside the city territory. In another vein, _De la prédication_ describes a plan based on punishment and reward. The only sketch which Cayer himself called an outline was the complete, detailed, well-reasoned _Plan d'éducation_. Here he deliberately kept his _Plan_ in strict outline form because he wanted to leave the actual

working basis to someone more able than he. Where the abbé felt most capable was in his role as an erudite and moral director. These two areas go hand in hand with Coyer the historian; and the historian is present in nearly every piece he published. He carefully researched and traced the origins of all his topics. He doubted in instances where a fact was not as he felt it should be. He questioned everything, as a good student of Bayle and a good *philosophe*.

Coyer had a very clear notion of what a *philosophe* was. His first duty was to question everything and believe only on proof and after thorough examination.[139] He must never explain problems "par les qualités occultes".[140] The *savant* can form his opinions independently without influence from existing beliefs or customs. He is above all useful; "c'est lui qui a produit tous les bons ouvrages du siècle."[141]

> "C'est lui qui donne à la morale plus de force persuasive, à l'histoire plus de vérité et d'instruction, au théâtre plus d'intérêt. C'est lui qui, dans tous les pays, rend les grands plus traitables, les petits plus confians, le guerrier plus humain, l'homme d'Eglise plus citoyen, le Magistrat plus éclairé."[142]

Since *la morale* is "la philosophie par excellence",[143] it is up to the *philosophe* to establish it. To do this he pushes aside the artifices of prestige, satire, eloquence, and the marvelous, and relies on the simplicity of Reason and Nature, which speak "à tous les esprits une langue intelligible."[144] Being integrally associated with discovering and teaching morality, the *philosophe* has influenced religion.

In speaking of God, the philosophe does not use him as an arbitrary legislator. Instead of saying, "Honor your father and mother because God orders it," he says, "God orders it because without this primary call of nature, whom will you love?" Not "God forbids violence," but "God forbids it because it turns cities and countrysides into theaters of trouble, horror, and blood."[145] The absence of the Trinity is clear. The philosophe is a deist. And the public would do well to listen to him and follow his example. The philosophe speaks of one single being, not several, who gives all and demands nothing in return. (Here Coyer's own theology and training are open to question.) The philosophe praises purity of heart and a universal philanthropy.[146] He has achieved valuable reforms in the Church: no more witch burning; no more pilgrimages to Jerusalem to ruin families; the Church is no longer a sanctuary for criminals, nor can some dissent be cut off from fidelity to the nation.[147] He has extinguished the fires of the Inquisition, disarmed intolerance, and caused justice to assist more humane methods.[148] It is easy to detect the secularization of Coyer's ideological evolution. He is heading to what he considered the ideal vocation, and the universal obligation for himself and all citizens, i.e., public service. The abbé is confident that the philosophe is capable of delivering the nation from still existing wrongs in jurisprudence, finance, politics, and theology.[149] It is no wonder that he found the philosophes to be a small, elitist group.[150]

Although extremely select in its membership, this group, by his own definition, included Coyer. The abbé never hesitated to call himself a philosophe. In his self categorization, he demonstrated the same boldness of pen but timidity of person that he showed in expressing his other ideas. As if in preparation for dispute of his title, the abbé stated that there were varying degrees of philosophes, but only covertly suggested that he was among the lesser ones.[151] Not only was he proud to be a member of the academies, especially in London and Nancy, but he also needed them for personal support, both to encourage his ego and to defend his works. Likewise, he felt qualified to defend others who bore the challenging name of philosophe. "Les Philosophes ne se plaindront point. Mais l'honnêteté publique élève la voix pour eux."[152] Coyer always maintained his role of public defender. He spoke for the peuple, for Dr. Maty, for Rousseau, Voltaire and all the philosophes in general; and when he was attacked, he required silence.[153] Maty, according to a letter which Coyer cites, considered his defence in safe hands when the abbé wanted to justify his report on Patagonian giants.[154] Coyer considered himself a philosophe in both world and deed.

In an almost existential freedom of choice, he lived by the philosophy that he set up. His preference in literature was far more philosophical than theological.[155] He chose his friends among those who had "un esprit cultivé,

une âme honnête, des moeurs simples".[156] To the greatest possible extent he also chose his reading audience, because he wrote for "des gens éclairés".[157] Coyer placed himself on an equal plane with Maty when he wrote in his favor. By his choice of actions, the abbé stuck closely by those lines which guide all philosophers: he sought proofs,[158] he acted with reason, he let Nature be his guide. He even developed a philosophical prevention for seasickness.[159]

Coyer was a philosophe. He was also a teacher, an historian, an academician, a moral guide, a preacher, an essayist: in fact, an homme de lettres with a profound consciousness of serving mankind. His honesty caused him to report everything, including himself just as he saw it. He made no pretenses about his self-judgement. He considered himself a more than adequate writer, whose talents placed him a notch below the famous-name authors of his century. This secondary position bothered him. The abbé suffered the frustration common to second or third-rate writers whose ambition and zeal have given them goals which they will never attain. If they have once tasted gloire, then the dissatisfaction is intensified. Coyer was grateful to a fault for the honors he received; each acceptance into an academy was a self-effacing and humbling experience. His modesty was at times tinged with bitterness. He saw injustice in the unequal ability of the public which judged him, in prejudiced criticism from his fellow authors, and in se-
[illegible] by those whose influence could have [illegible] only

to him. Vacillation between boldness and temerity, self-assurance and lack of confidence, success and failure is visible in his style, which is as uneven in quality as were his moods. A closer examination of Coger's style and [illegible] his own time [illegible] "[illegible] ordre."

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER VII

[1] *Discours...dans l'Académie...*, pp. 7-8.

[2] *Discours sur le satyre contre les philosophes*, p. [illegible].

[3] *Académie*, p. [illegible].

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[7] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[8] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[9] *Satyre*, p. 17.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[11] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[12] *Académie*, p. [illegible].

[13] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[18] *Satyre*, p. [illegible].

[19] Académie, p. 19.

[20] Ibid., p. 21.

[21] Ibid., p. 7.

[22] Ibid., pp. [illegible].

[23] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[24] Carême, pp. [illegible].

[25] Saturne, p. [illegible].

[26] Siècle présent, [illegible].

[27] Académie, [illegible].

[28] Ibid., pp. [illegible].

[29] Ibid., [illegible].

[30] Astrolabe, p. 1.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Prédication, [illegible].

[33] Ibid., pp. [illegible].

[34] Académie, pp. [illegible].

[35] Prédication, p. [illegible].

[36] Académie, p. 14.

[37] Plan d'éducation, p. xiii.

[38] Académie, pp. 32-33.

[39] Chinki, p. [illegible].

[40] Académie, pp. [illegible].

[41] Siècle présent, pp. 10, 3[illegible]; and Plaisir, pp. 112-113.

[42] Nouvelles observations, p. 7.

[43] Plaisir, pp. 112-113.

[44] Satyre, [illegible].

[45] Académie, [illegible].

[46] Ibid., [illegible].

[47] Ibid., [illegible].

[48] Certhier, [illegible].

[49] Ibid., [illegible].

[50] Plan d'éducation, [illegible].

[51] Intrie, [illegible].

[52] Noblesse, [illegible].

[53] Preuves de Noblesse, [illegible].

[54] Plan d'éducation, pp. [illegible], [illegible].

[55] Satyre, pp. 72, 7[illegible]; and Académie, [illegible].

[56] Coyer is quite right in citing the ridiculous scene from the Passion, when the Eternal Father was overcome by grief at the expiration of Christ, and an apostle said to him:

"Père Eternel, vous avez tort:
Vous devriez avoir grand'vergogne:
Votre Fils Jésus-Christ est mort,
Et vous ronflez comme un ivrogne.
Reveillez-vous; car votre fils
Veut s'en aller en Paradis."

Voyages d'Italie, II, [illegible], note (a).

[57] Nouvelles observations, [illegible].

[58] Satyre, [illegible].

[59] Ibid., pp. 107-108.

[60] Ibid., p. 108-109.

[61] Satyre, p. [illegible].

[62] Préliminaire, [illegible].

[63] Plan d'éducation, p. [illegible].

[64] Noblesse, pp. [illegible].

[65] Académie, [illegible].

[66] Sociéski, I, vii-viii.

[67] Ibid., I, viii; III, [illegible].

[68] Nouvelles observations, p. [illegible].

[69] One has only to consult Joyer's prefaces and footnotes to see how well he knew these "friends".

[70] Italie, I, 202.

[71] Plan d'éducation, p. viii.

[72] Carême, p. 13.

[73] Dissertation sur la nature de l'homme, p. [illegible].

[74] Italie, I, 199-200.

[75] Ibid., pp. 201, 224.

[76] Lerthier, p. 17; and Prédication, p. 18.

[77] Unpublished letters to Malesherbes, Bibliothèque Nationale, MSS N.A.Fr. 3347, fo. 153, 143. Cited in Malibran, note 2, pp. 436-437.

[78] Nouvelles observations, p. 251.

[79] Pierre philosophale, p. 53.

[80] Plan d'éducation, p. xii.

[81] Noblesse, p. 7.

[82] Défense...Noblesse, I, 1[illegible].

[83] Unpublished letter to L. Guy, Œuvres diverses de J.-J. Rousseau, citoyen de Genève, t. VII, cited in Malibran, note 7.

[84] Chibli, p. [illegible]; Satyre, p. [illegible].

[85] Raty, p. 20.

[86] Sobieski, VII, 3[illegible].

[87] Académie, p. 32.

[88] Carême, pp. 4[illegible]-[illegible].

[89] Coyer's testament, cited in Desfaudres, Humoriste, p. [illegible].

[90] Ibid., [illegible], [illegible].

[91] Pollent, p. [illegible].

[92] Ibid., II, [illegible].

[93] Carême, p. [illegible].

[94] Italie, I, 4[illegible].

[95] Plan d'éducation, p. 170.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Plan d'éducation, p. 215.

[98] Italie, I, [illegible].

[99] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[100] Ibid., p. 91.

[101] Etrennes, p. 28; Défense..Noblesse, II, 90; Italie, I, 127-128, 198, 243.

[102] Plan d'Education, p. 200.

[103] Italie, II, [illegible].

[104] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[105] Italie, I, [illegible].

[106] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[107] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[108] Italie, II, [illegible].

[109] Testament, cited in Desnoiresterres, Houdetot, p. 21[illegible].

[110] Dissertation sur la nature du peuple, p. [illegible].

[111] Inventaire après décès, cited in [illegible], p. [illegible].

[112] Italie, I, 241.

[113] Italie, II, [illegible].

[114] Italie, I, 31.

[115] Italie, II, 140; Holland, p. 209.

[116] Italie, I, [illegible].

[117] Ibid., p. 208.

[118] Holland, p. 239.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Italie, I, [illegible]; Heidenger, p. 13[illegible].

[121] Italie, II, 23, 29.

[122] Italie, I, 92.

[123] Italie, II, 53.

[124] Italie, I, [illegible].

[125] Holland, p. 202.

[126] Italie, I, 101.

[127] Ibid., pp. 116-117.

[128] Plan d'éducation, p. 194.

[129] Italie, I, 200.

[130] A famous Italian minister was preaching against the dangers of [illegible] to balls: "Vediamo ogni giorno una zitella andar al ballo col fiore della medicinia, e ritornarsene alla casa col frutto." Italie, II, 1[illegible]7.

[131] "J'ai vu une des plus belles villes de l'Europe; mais, en entrant dans la vieille cité, il trouverait un cloaque infect. On sait que Timoléon, le libérateur de Corinthe, voyant des exhalaisons malsaines qui en avait sali les portes, à dessein de l'insulter, dit qu'il connaissait à la qualité des dispositions, que la République était bien saine: cloaque pas même lieu de penser aussi que la police de Marseille ne se porte pas bien." Ibid., p. 110.

[132] Italie, I, [illegible].

[133] Ibid., p. 2[illegible]8.

[134] Nouvelles observations, p. 102.

[135] Italie, I, 244-246.

[136] Ibid., p. 271.

[137] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[138] Ibid.

[139] Italie, II, 121.

[140] Plan l'Éducation, pp. 172-173.

[141] Ibid.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid., p. 28[illegible].

[144] Prédication, p. [illegible].

[145] Ibid., pp. 60-61.

[146] Satyre, p. 42.

[147] Prédication, pp. [illegible].

[148] Plan d'Éducation, p. 173.

[149] Ibid., pp. 173-174.

[150] Prédication, p. [illegible].

[151] Satyre, p. [illegible].

[152] Ibid., p. [illegible].

[153] With one exception: When Allaire tried to attribute the Pansoers letters to [illegible], at the expense of a shared friendship with Descoeur, Joyce defended his honesty and his name admirable.

[154] Gatz, pp. 30-32.

[155] Holland, p. 223.

[156] Italie, II, 10[illegible].

[157] Italie, I, [illegible].

[158] Gatz, p. [illegible].

[159] Nouvelles observations, p. 4.

[160] Plan d'Éducation, pp. 309, 322.

[161] Testament, cited in Deslandres, Humoriste, p. 219.

CHAPTER IV

AN EXAMINATION OF COYER'S STYLE

During more than three decades, the abbé Coyer turned out twenty-five literary works. They were all in prose. The majority appeared first in short, pamphlet form, as if to test the public before their publication in a more unified edition. Some were daring and were suppressed, if not condemned, and often did not endure. Others lived dignified lives as works written on commission and endured both time and criticism. Still others, although nobly intended, were less interesting and faded unnoticed with each passing year. If one looks at Coyer's work as a unit, a rather obvious evolution in style becomes apparent.

There are three periods in Coyer's writing which show the changes that took place in his approach, language, and ideas. The first period covers those pamphlets which eventually composed the _Bagatelles morales_. They were all successful from the very first. He wrote four of the seven _feuilles volantes_ the first year. Two were suppressed and were not included in the collection.[1] The other two enjoyed immediate popularity but were so close to the works of several other authors, that their success is due only in part to Coyer.[2] As a unit appearing over a seven year period,

these frivolous pamphlets are light, gay, and without real substance. From a salon-like atmosphere, Coyer moved into a more serious, more solid stage of writing which lasted twice as long as his first period. It showed a pen ripened by experience and encouraged by success. The abbé was more diverse. This period is strongly nationalistic and "philosophical", (i.e., influenced by the presence and writings of the philosophes.) Here is Coyer the scholar and the historian of his own and ancient times. These publications should have been the ones which enhanced his position in the ranks of the well known writers, but the frivolous success of the Bagatelles had impaired the public eye and it was not prepared to change. The last ten years of his life show Coyer with a fatigued imagination, his work changed in spirit and in quality. He can do no more than reflect upon enjoyable past experiences, voyages to foreign countries, or translate other authors. He is worn out. But before he dies, his pen is revitalized by his own changed personality. An uncharacteristic end to a failing career appears in his final publication,[2] although too late to impress a public apparently tiring of his literary presence. Coyer takes up a fiery pen in an epiphany of inspiration fed by disillusionment, and damns his reading audience as he does the Church in his Testament. While favorite expressions, constructions and ideas earmarked his entire literary career, the results of the changing Coyer are evident in the three periods.

Découverte de la pierre philosophale symbolizes the body of the Bagatelles. The idea of discovery was exciting for Coyer's century. It would naturally interest his contemporaries. What Coyer attempts to discover for his readers--because for him it is not a matter of discovery, but of revealing a known fact--is something which exists, not hidden but disguised, in and around all those who will read the Bagatelles. The philosopher's stone is a way of life built upon the search for an unobtainable happiness. Everyone believes he knows what it is, and sets about finding that intangible quality composed of facades, disguises, dishonesty, weak moral character, selfishness, and wastefulness. Coyer chose his title carefully. The Bagatelles are imaginative fantasy with the single aim of pointing out the defects in "la morale". They charm the reader by their personal flavor. They are amusing and humorous. Their style is similar to salon games, devinettes, and the sucreries necessary to attract and please the socially élite are abundant. As a group, these pamphlets share similar characteristics, frequently too similar.

Each one repeats the same lists of criticisms. While Coyer undoubtedly saw repetition under different guises as sound pedogogical technique--drilling over and over up to the point of saturation with the lesson taught--many times he did not vary the guises enough to avoid redundancy. Lettre à un grand and Lettre à une jeune dame nouvellement

mariée are carbon copies of each other, the only difference being the addressee. They both speak directly to the reader in a *tête-à-tête* in which Coyer repeats without any organization what should demonstrate a good citizen, a model spouse and parent, a magnanimous noble, and proper comportment. Each uses the same literary devices: rhetorical questions, precious language, knowledge of current salon amusements and repeated imperatives. Most similar is the reversal technique where the author ironically states one thing while obviously meaning another. Notice the similarity in style, ideas, and language:

> (*Grand*): "Vous n'avez que quatre valets de chambre qui ne sont pas mieux mis que des Gentilshommes de Province un peu étoffés. Vous devriez du moins leur apprendre qu'il n'est pas jour à huit heures."4
>
> (*Dame*): "Si je voulois, Madame, je vous perdrois de réputation sur votre vie du matin. On vous trouve levée à huit heures... Vos femmes sont étonnées d'employer plus de temps à s'ajuster elles-mêmes, qu'à parer leur Maîtresse."5

Another shared quality in the *Bagatelles* is the element of change or disguise, something rendered more exciting by a superlative which suggests a fleeting thrill. Their titles deceivingly advertise the marvelous (*l'Année merveilleuse*), magic (*La Magie démontrée*), mascarade (*Les Masques*), enjoyment (*Plaisir pour le peuple*), and an exotic playland (*Découverte de l'isle frivole*). The disguise, however, is as transparent as "the emperor's new clothes" in which everyone sees the real person, nakedly visible down to the skin,

because his garments are only an imaginary facade, covering up grotesque traits for himself alone. In a third epistolary pamphlet, La Magie démontrée, a Jewish traveler all too naïvely calls "magic" what are blatant foibles in society's makeup. The element of change is important as a recurring theme: change through disguise (Masques, Magie) and reversal of the roles of men and women, which he calls hermaphroditism only in Astrologue, although the topic appears in l'Année merveilleuse, Magie, Plaisir pour le peuple, and Découverte de l'isle frivole. One begins to wonder why Coyer was so redundant in theme and style, and consequently, why the public tolerated it, since it was the Bagatelles which hoisted the abbé's name and personality to the forefront.

The pamphlets were less noticeably repetitious before they were published as a unit. As the public read them one by one, by an anonymous author, the readers reflected less upon their literary worth than upon their topicality. They were light reading in a preferred genre,[6] something often discussed at social gatherings. To discover why Coyer chose this style and genre with all its defects, it is only necessary to look at the blazing success of the first. L'Année merveilleuse had three immediate editions. When the abbé saw that this was what could reward him with his desired "gloire",he saw no reason to change. The reason all the pieces are moralizing is still more obvious: Coyer's education with

the Jesuit brothers had dealt integrally with la morale. For ten or fifteen years he had been passing on to the duke's children what he himself had thoroughly learned. This evolution follows easily into public service, when we know that every one of Coyer's publications had a didactic end. The abbé was fortunate that his forte happened to be where the public's interest lay. From the time the pamphlets appeared together as Bagatelles morales, although their general popularity continued, the critics began to find the author's weaknesses.

The good and bad qualities of the Bagatelles are well mixed throughout each pamphlet. All the Bagatelles have interesting, attention-drawing beginnings. Five of the seven pamphlets in the 1754 edition begin with an interrogation. This technique is effective because questions tend to speak directly to the reader even when they are of a general nature. Also, a question needs an answer, and the reader must continue until he is satisfied.

> (Pierre philosophale): "Il y a un mois que je balance; travaillerai-je à perfectionner les Pantins, ou à mettre la France à son aise?"[7]

"What is the matter with France?" the reader asks himself.

> (Magie): "Que fais-tu, Ben Josué?"[8]

"Who is this foreigner, and who is writing to him?" says the reader.

> (Plaisir pour le peuple): "Le peuple qui par ses travaux est le soutien de l'Etat, n'a-t-il pas droit aux délassements?"[9]

"What kind of relaxation?" asks the nobleman.

> (Grand): "Oubliez-vous que vous êtes né grand?"[10]

Here is food for scandal.

> (l'Isle frivole): "L'Amiral Anson vient de donner au Public l'Histoire interessante de son voyage autour du Monde; mais pourquoi a-t-il voulu nous dérober la connaissance d'une Isle que la Nature a formée pour nous comme pour lui?"[11]

This last opening regards a topic of current interest, and suggests that the reader is being mistreated. He will read on to find out what the writer intends to do about it. An example of the inequality of Coyer's work is obvious in a comparison of these openings with their dull, forced endings.

> (Pierre philosophale): "Je demande à présent si une source d'argent toujours coulante, n'est pas la vraie Pierre philosophale?"[12]
>
> (l'Année merveilleuse): "Tous les siécles sentiront le bienfait ineffable de l'Année merveilleuse."[13]
>
> (Plaisir pour le peuple): "Et en s'occupant pour le Peuple, il[Foki] travaille pour la portion du Public la plus véridique, & qui dit le plus brusquement ce qu'elle pense."[14]

Since the titles have little to do with the body of the pamphlet, and their subjects are frequently mentioned only in the opening and closing paragraphs which sandwich Coyer's moralizing, the final sentence becomes a desperate effort to unify the leaflet and rationalize the use of the title. Just as Coyer's opening and closing sentences and paragraphs tend towards a set pattern, so do the formats of the feuilles volantes.

The entirety of the Bagatelles uses only three basic plans. The letters to the Grand and the Jeune dame nouvellement mariée are naturally epistolary, counseling, probing, and chiding. He has divided the Pierre philosophale and Plaisir pour le peuple into convenient little packages, each tiny chapter concerning a single, simple idea, sometimes only as long as a paragraph. This is his most well-polished approach, with less redundancy and more tightly knit composition. L'Année merveilleuse and La Magie démontrée have not even the pretext of a pattern. Consequently, they ramble, repeat, drag, and are more artificial. I have purposely omitted l'Isle frivole and Le Siècle présent. The former is an aberration to the rest of the Bagatelles by its quality, quantity and form. Considered by some as the best of the group, l'Isle frivole approaches the philosophical tale in style and length. The moralizing is more covert, and the ultimate effect unusual and imaginative. Le Siècle présent, the only bagatelle not published as a feuille volante before the 1754 edition, is the liaison between Coyer the frivolous, sugary author and Coyer the forthright, philosophical critic. Its title disguises nothing. Although once again beginning interrogatively, the rest of its plan differs from the standard Coyer approach. He openly presents his observations on every facet of eighteenth century life from city planning, government, and literature, to music, religion and luxe. Clearly the first of its kind in the light of what Coyer

had previously published, this pamphlet in its turn sets the pattern for what follows. However, in the body of the piece, as in preceding and following pamphlets, there are outstanding telltale characteristics of its author regarding construction, language and images.

Two items stand above all others when we look at the details of Coyer's style: simplicity to the point of sterility, and a necessity to remain in the present time. The latter is also linked to the former. Coyer's sentences are long in narrative form and short in conversational exposition. All verbs are simple and unmodified. Most are in the present indicative or future, which maintains the feeling of present time. His use of imperatives and infinitives is prodigious. They also link with the present. All four types of verbs add to the precision, clarity, and staccato effect, which he underlines by frequently using them in lists. Such lists have the unfortunate effect of redundancy, even if what he lists is entirely different in meaning and feeling. The reader has the impression that the author was in a hurry to get all his ideas down at once, without taking the time to couch them in richer surroundings. So many infinitives remove the personal element and add to the stark, preaching effect. More lists of imperatives and interrogatives result in a certain brusqueness and contribute to the staccato. He heaps up nouns in the same manner.

> (Infinitives): "Est-on encore étonné de les <u>voir</u> [les femmes], la sphère dans une main & le compas dans l'autre, <u>mesurer</u> ou <u>arranger</u> le

Monde, de les voir anatomiser l'ame, ou fouiller dans le sein de la matière pour y trouver des Monades, & accréditer Leibnitz?"15

(Interrogatives): "Que faisiez-vous dimanche dernier dans votre Paroisse, à dix heures du matin? Déjà habillée! Et qui le croira? Sans sac! Est-ce ainsi, est-ce à dix heures, est-ce dans sa Paroisse qu'une femme de condition entend la Messe? Est-il bien vrai que vous assistez aux Vêpres?"16

(Imperative): "Cela étant, comptons les grandeurs, les excellences, les éminences, tous les Monseigneurs,...N'en portons le nombre qu'à deux cent mille. Supponsons favorablement qu'il n'y en ait qu'une moitié chargée de dettes,...Taxons-les à dix sols par jour."17

(Simple tense verbs): "Vous avez lu qu'ils étoient modérés dans leurs maisons & prodigues pour le bien commun, qu'ils payoient les dettes des pauvres, qu'ils dotoient les filles, qu'ils faisoient des largesses au peuple pour soulager le poids du travail & de l'inégalité; & qu'il leur arrivoit de finir par tester en sa faveur..."18

(Nouns): "C'est alors qu'on verra des changemens de couleurs, des baillemens, des attitudes violentes, des suffocations."

or: "On verra jaillir de la source du feu des bonnets de Docteur...: quantité de casques sur des girouettes, des bâtons ce commandement qui chercheront des mains, des couronnes qui s'entrechoqueront en pétards..., des encensoirs pour la Cour..."19

The rapidity achieved is undercut by overuse of the technique. As if simple, unmodified verbs, lists which resemble outlines, and nouns untroubled by adjectives and by few metaphors or literary allusions, were not enough to make his subject clear, Coyer carries his didactic method even farther by taking away any possible work from the reader: he asks and answers his own questions, and over-explains any allusion

which would need thought for interpretation.

> "Paris restera-t-il en arrière? On s'en apperçoit trop."20

> "La femme piquée s'adresse au premier enchanteur qui se présente, & compose avec lui un signe ineffaçable qui se place sur la tête du Mari; & ce signe,...signifie à tout le monde qu'elle est vengée."21

Coyer repeats, and warns, "je le répète",[22] announces when he is coming to the heart of the matter, informs the reader when he is exaggerating, and gives precise definitions to avoid any equivocation.[23] He explained in detail in a footnote one of the few literary allusions he made in the Bagatelles.[24] The single area in which the abbé allows himself a little freedom and decoration is in his images.

He is fond of concrete metaphors to make his idea more comprehensible, not unlike religion, the miracles, the saints and God, graphically depicted in cathedrals in the Middle Ages.

> "Nos jeunes gens ne sont que des pendules où les femmes marquent les heures."25

This citation also has a sexual implication, a tendency which shows up fairly regularly in Coyer, although he was probably unaware of it for the most part.

> "Les enfans...ces jolies machines avoient apporté du sein de leurs meres des ressorts extrêmement délicats."26

La Mettrie and Berthier must certainly have been on opposite sides regarding the precision of this image. Coyer's defense of materialism some years later proved his predilection for the materialistic branch of the philosophes.

The abbé's preferred figures of speech seem to be metonymy and synechdoche. There are plenty of examples scattered through the Bagatelles:

> (Definition of "parjure"): "Nous entendons un mensonge confirmé par serment, soit devant un Magistrat,...ou devant deux beaux yeux."[27]
>
> "Ils sont réduits à payer des mains pour les habiller."[28]
>
> "La faim danse bien mal."[29]

Even with the sterility which reigns in his language, his images sometimes fall into the same precious formation that he criticized in others. For Coyer, bread was the metaphor for subsistence. Here it takes on airs; but remains inoffensive.

> "Le pain avoit la légereté de nos oublis."[30]

Elsewhere his circumlocution served a purpose: it gave physical or sexual ideas proper demeanor:

> "Dans notre Isle la Nature fournit aux meres deux sources de lait pour nourrir leurs enfans."[31]
>
> "L'autre /reference to Les Bijoux indiscrets/ avec un Bijoux arrachoit aux femmes le secret impénétrable."[32]

He devotes an entire section of Pierre philosophale to the deflowering of maidens. The title of the small chapter is "Taxe du Larcin de l'Honneur" and concerns how easy it is for one sex to steal "cette espece d'honneur" from the other, especially "dans une Nation où il y a tant de voleurs & point de verroux."[33] Once again one of his images has sexual implications, although this time, I believe Coyer was

conscious of the metaphors he chose. He exploits the fire metaphor in all possible connotations: the fire in women's manly courage,[34] the consuming fire of religious devotion,[35] and the enduring flame of literary glory.[36] This image will continue to burn throughout every publication up to the fires of damnation in Carême. Along with recurring images, Coyer has many reappearing nouns.

The repetition of nouns, seen along with the stark simplicity of the author's syntax and choice of verbs, brings his construction even closer to a skeletal form, clothed only in stingily given images. His repeated use of parts of the body, especially head, feet and hands, lacks only the heart to represent total devotion, a magnanimous conception of man not at all unusual coming from an abbé. Realizing Coyer's penchant for public service, it is not surprising to find recurrances of the typically intangible philosophe jargon: justice, liberty, peace, nature, humanity, and honor. These words would be especially appropriate for Coyer, for nearly all his publications dealt integrally with the improvement of France as a powerful nation. More surprising are favorite words like mirror or powder. Mirror, rather than being sexual, was more a symbol for truth, or lack of truth, in society. Powder is that light, precious artifact which was widely used to disguise and hide the ugliness apparent in his contemporaries. It is important to return to the word fire which predominates in the abbé's images.

Le feu seems to be Coyer's universal metaphor. It changes faces and nuances with chameleon-like facility. Because of its long-term usage and the broad interpretations he gives this word, it is Coyer's most revealing expression. For the same reason, it is necessary to view it throughout his literary career. By his images, the author presents fire as either productive or destructive, *i.e.*, the giver of life or punishment and death. In both senses it demonstrates overwhelming power and passion. Coyer uses *le feu* in both derogatory and flattering ways. It appears in verbal (*eg.*, "allumer", "s'enflammer", "bruler", "éteindre") and nominal forms (*eg.*, "flamme", "flambeau", "feu", "fagot", "incendie", "cendres souffrées"). Most often it has to do with religion. Coyer speaks of "le feu du ciel", "le feu de la Parole", "le feu Apostolique". Godly fire is purifying. In his own métier, "le feu de l'auteur" represented literary zeal, while "le flambeau de l'histoire" was the light (enlightenment) of knowledge, indispensible to the *philosophes*. Still artistically speaking, on two occasions Coyer mentions statues animated by the fire of their sculptors. Fire was the animation of youth ("le feu de l'âge"). On the other hand, physically more natural, "le feu" also represented war, discord, firearms and battle. As for man, the ultimate compliment was to have eyes, temperament, or strength of fire. Sobieski possessed all three, plus vigorous physical action. "Sa marche ressemble à un

feu dévorant."[37] The Inquisition punished with fire. It symbolized heavenly and human anger. Here there is no question of preciosity or circumlocution. If his own work could have been infused with the same fire he put into his metaphors, its quality would be of another nature. In the numerous fire metaphors which Coyer used, he showed his most imaginative bent.

Religious fire was of ultimate importance to Coyer. If exposed to atheism, le peuple, by its blind passion "se feroit brûler ou brûleroit les autres."[38] "Le Verbe incarné n'a pas purifié la terre par le feu de sa parole."[39]

> (Speaking of the Saint Bartholemew Massacre): "Ah, un coeur Huguenot, c'est de la cendre souffrée... Le principe qu'elle couvre, c'est le feu. Les matières combustibles qui doivent l'irriter, c'est le meurtre de Vassy & cent autres."[40]

It is the consistency of the images, without being repetitive, that makes the phrases imaginative and original. Although he vacillated between his disgust with war and its utility in the case of national defense, his metaphors indicate the former to be stronger than the latter. Still speaking of the revocation of the Edit de Nantes, the abbé continued with the same consistency in metaphors.

> "Le meurtre de Vassy n'auroit jamais allumé le feu des guerres civiles, s'il n'eut couvé depuis longtems dans le coeur des Huguenots. On n'est pas si prompt à s'enflamer quand on ne parte pas avec soi le principe de l'incendie."[41]

In Coyer's own century, Alletz picked out copious examples from the abbé's writings to show neologisms and strikingly new metaphors in his contemporaries. He included

many nuances of Coyer's fire metaphors. Alletz mentions the "étincelle de vie", the anger of kings as "un feu dévorant qui consume tout dans sa première chaleur," the "feu de genie", and, speaking of a man with a broad knowledge and much spirit, he quoted, "C'étoit un Prométhée qui avoit volé le feu de ciel."[42] It is not unusual for a single idea to have so many faces.

The variations on his theme redeem their reappearance and save them from redundancy, especially in Berthier and Sobieski. In the concepts of passion, punishment, creation and discord, all of which Coyer represented by flame, one can see the priestly training, but it is tempered by philosophical and worldly influences. Although a deist, his basic Catholic training remained. While he demonstrated the foibles of the clerics in seering irony, he did it through intellectual finesse and social respect. As a man, he was not allowed the sensual passion which his words vicariously could describe. The passion from his pen was as untouchable as the fire that portrayed it. He saw fire in all its connotations: heat (passion, anger, war, punishment), light (knowledge, wisdom, even humor /Étrennes/), of intangible, inexplicable, uncapturable quality (religion, life, inspiration), and covering all of the above, he saw its necessity. This fire for Coyer was a dream, a protection, and a weapon. It was useful, one of his principal requirements for the existence of anything. What followed the Bagatelles was still more useful.

After seven years of frivolous pamphlets which pointed out society's moral weaknesses, Coyer was encouraged and ready to attempt more solid material. His preface to the Bagatelles and the addition of Le Siècle présent began to rationalize the next stage in his development as a writer. Siècle, he says, is the only pamphlet "qui ait l'avantage de la nouveauté sans avoir plus de corps que ses soeurs."[43] It acts as an intermediary between the frivolous and the serious. He implores the indulgence of the reader for the lightness of the seven "trifles". To compensate, adds Coyer, "je m'engage (foi d'auteur) à le dédommager par des ouvrages très-utiles..."[44], after which he includes the scholarly works on la Patrie and le Peuple, and the dissertation on Greek and Roman religions. Coyer's description of Le Siècle présent is correct. The "nouveauté" is in ideas and the direct approach. He touches on an extremely wide variety of subjects, but uses no device, either clever or erudite, to disguise his message. Siècle foreshadows later works on education, commerce and manufacture, and the indigent nobility. The title indicates the body of the work. This openness in technique is the germ of every following publication. Stylewise, however, Coyer has accumulated all the bad traits of the previous Bagatelles and exploited them in a single pamphlet. There are lists of nouns, verbs, conjunctions, prepositions and adjectives on every page. The reader is out of breath at the end because the author

has hurried so, in order to cram all his examples into one sentence or paragraph. On a single page Coyer states that his ancestors had:

> "de plus belles perruques, des habits plus élégans, des meubles plus recherchés, des équipages plus lestes, une dance plus légère, un meilleur ton de complimens..."45

One long sentence later he talks about:

> "leur Architecture étoit plus noble, leur Pinceau pluf fort, leur Eloquence plus male, leur poésie plus naturelle, leur Commerce plus florissant, leurs entreprises plus vastes, leur génie plus élevé, leurs héros plus grands..."46

Sometimes the repeated elements are in a series of staccato simple sentences.

> "Leurs hommes d'Etat....Leurs Eveques.... Leurs Prédicateurs....Leurs Médecins.... Leurs Chirugiens...."47

The latter method produces a happier result. But when twenty-three such lists compose approximately one-half a page each, in a total of thirty-six pages, fussy, cumbersome heaps overshadow the desired simplicity.

From now on, Coyer puts aside the metronomically soporific style. His subjects are less broad and more clearly defined. He takes a passionate interest in these topics which he considers of ultimate importance and urgency. They are well documented. Most are erudite, and not intended to amuse. His audience is more specialized. His arguments are more convincing. Coyer's first publication after the <u>Bagatelles morales</u> tested out his newfound historical legs.

The Dissertation sur la difference de deux anciennes religions, la Grecque et la Romaine is learned, and would have interested few of those who avidly devoured the Bagatelles if Coyer had not used a style designed to hold their interest. He made few changes in his overall approach, but the changes he made plus the sobriety which is his, are more suitable for serious, didactic subjects. While the repetitions remain, they are much fewer in number, and fit in well as a variant in his sober presentation. The major parts of speech are still unmodified and the verbs are still simple. The concrete images and metynomy have disappeared. He largely uses the imperfect tense, natural for the copious descriptions in a narrative past, and the passé simple alternated at times with the simple present tense. The effect of the alternation is good, as the present tense makes the history more alive for his readers. The abbé has other devices to make the reader an active part of his narration. One is the frequent use of the first person plural verb, not surprising coming from a teacher. Another is the strange mixture of vulgarization and erudition. Both devices were necessary as a literary cover for what is a good outline of Coyer's deistic philosophy. Not once does he stray from history to preach. In addition, all the historical facts are clearly identified in footnotes, and often quoted in their original Latin form. Clarity and historical form are at once obvious. At times he oversimplifies as he did earlier, but

it is more pardonable here because of the subject matter. Coyer's awareness of historiography compelled him to discuss his bibliography.

> "Je citerai souvent...[Denys d'Halicarnasse] parce qu'...il est peut être le seul qui par ces détails, son discernement & sa critique judicieuse nous fasse connoître à fond les Romains."[4]

In such a work, Coyer's outlining within the body of the text is also understandable. He gives four well-defined sections, numbers them as such, and never strays from his own plan. Between each section there is a good liaison to tie in the thought of the old with that of the one just continued. Like the improvements that he made in his translation vis-à-vis the moral treatise, Coyer seems to show a quality in his work which was not previously apparent. The changes in tone and approach are more suitable to the philosophical role he is most qualified to fulfill. But the roman religion exemplified what the social relief say she believe was not entirely celestial.

> "Comme ces étoient [les dieux] mais ignorer comment ils avoient pris naissance."[5]
>
> "Ils voulaient des dieux de nature vraiment divine, des dieux dégagés de la matière."[6]
>
> "...dieux utiles."[7]
>
> "...cette maxime de Cicéron: qu'il est de la nature des dieux de faire le bien aux hommes.
> C'est sur ce principe qu'ils divinisèrent la concorde, la paix, le salut, la liberté: les vertus...la prudence, la vérité, le courage, la foi..."[8]

> "Les romains les jugeoient [les dieux] trop bons pour punir toujours des crimes ordinaires à l'humanité."[63]

> "Le merveilleux de la religion romaine fut moins fanatique."[64]

It was easy for Coyer to cover his profession of deism by his style. He is more covert here than he ever will be again. Citing Cicero, the Illiad, the Odyssey, the Aeneid in an article on ancient religions gave him total freedom in a Bayle-like structure to say what he pleased. Coyer's biography of Sobieski worked in a similar way in criticizing the French government. Here, however, his praises of Polish [illegible] tested, and [illegible] results. In Sobieski, Coyer strikes out at frequent intervals against absolute monarchy and [illegible] the monarchs themselves. In no way does he attempt to disguise his respect for a republic, elected rulers, or a voting [illegible].

> "Toutes les expressions dont on se servoit auparavant pour désigner la puissance royale, 'que la volonté du Roi fait la loi, qu'il faut obéir au Roi comme à Dieu, par exemple, Roi par la grace de Dieu', & d'autres semblables, furent bannies du langage public; quelques-uns alloient plus loin, & prétendoient qu'un peuple libre n'a pas besoin de Roi."[65]

> "Lorsque donc [de Valois] arriva à Cracovie, on y sçavoit que Charles IX, son Frere venoit d'assassiner une partie de ses Sujets pour convertir l'autre. On craignoit qu'un Prince élevé dans une Cour fanatique & violente, n'en apportat l'esprit."[66]

Coyer has delivered a direct blow against his own country. In praising the active, intelligent, laborious [illegible]

Polish nation, he cannot resist an open strike at inherited monarchy.

> "Dès le quatorzieme sicele elle a fait des Rois: ce ne sont pas des enfans qui naissent avec la Couronne avant que davoir des vertus, & qui, dans la maturité de l'âge, peuvent encore sommeiller sur le Trône." 57

The abbé also spoke out against religious orders. As if quoting another author disguised his aim, Coyer cites a fellow French religious; but paraphrasing someone else did not take away the sting of his attack.

> "Né Fils de Roi [in the Polish line of Jagellon], il ne put résister à l'envie d'être Religieux, espece de maladie qui attaque la Jeunesse, dit l'Abbé de Saint-Pierre, & qu'il appelloit la petite vérole de l'esprit."58

While the court was crying out for the suppression of Sobieski for political reasons, Voltaire and others recognized its literary merits.

The long preface to Sobieski is a nutshell history of Poland from the beginning of its existence up to the time of Coyer's hero. Well documented and succinct, it was the source book for other writers in the eighteenth century. A single paragraph can give the makeup of the Polish government and the roles of its leaders for a generation. No wasted words, no redundancies. Once into the history of the man, the style changes to narrative description instead of a continuation of chronological facts.

L'Histoire de Jean Sobieski is primarily anecdotal, that method of historiography for which Voltaire and those

who followed criticised him. But there was merit in his descriptions. Coyer gives realistic and exciting accounts of battles and makes moving, personal descriptions of the main characters in the history. He mentions colors and blood in battles, terrifying facial expressions of the Infidels, and contrasts Sobieski's imperial character and public figure. This description of a Polish cavalry soldier is worthy of comparison to the equestrian painting of Napoleon by David. Had the artist painted this soldier as well, Napoelon's portrait would have suffered.

> "Les Polonois sont naturellement grands & bien faits. Qu'on imagine donc un Cavalier d'une taille avantageuse, couvert d'une cuirasse embellie, un casque sur la tête, une peau de panthere dont le mufle s'attache au devant de l'épaule gauche, le reste passant par derriere jusqu'à la hanche droite, une lance dorée de 14 à 15 pieds, portant à sa pointe une banderole pour épouvanter les chevaux ennemis, deux pistolets & deux sabres, l'un à son côté, l'autre sous sa cuisse gauche, attaché le long de la selle. Cet homme ainsi armé monte un beau cheval dont le harnois est enrichi de plaques d'or émaillé, & souvent de pierreries. Louis XIV. en vit un qui lui fut amené, & l'admira."[59]

The pattern he used to describe is typical of Coyer's style; he formed a verbal pyramid. A short sentence, simple and unadorned, introduces the topic. One long sentence describes the soldier. It is detailed. It gives physical materials in such a way as to convince the reader that he can feel them (eg., the panther skin, the horse's saddle). Some words have an onomatopoetic effect: "plaque d'or", or "le reste passant par derriere jusqu'àlla hanche droite" with an abundance of liquid and sibilant consonants suggesting

the sliding, sleek quality of the panther while still alive as well as the same transferred quality as symbolic ornamentation to a soldier's appearance. The precise location of each detail on the soldier's body adds to the visual quality. The length of the sentence heightens the stylistic pyramid. The description of the horse, less important, is less long. The final sentence, nearly as short as the first one, is extremely important. It mentions the greatest of the recent French kings, respected and known to be extravagant in his own tastes. To say that Louis XIV saw one of these soldiers and admired him, is more effective in its understatement, than another opinion might have been in hyperbole. In a description of the hideously frightening physical appearance of the Tartars, dreaded enemies of the Poles, Coyer increases the ugliness of their faces by suggesting that, "Peut-être étoient-ils encore plus hideux au tems d'Alexandre."[60] Coyer frequently uses this technique of understatement to achieve a heightened effect. Note the horror of the accepted treatment of Polish peasants.

> "La Pologne frappe ses propres enfants. Chaque Seigneur est obligé de loger son Serf. C'est dans une très pauvre cabane, où des enfans nuds, sous la rigueur d'un climat glacé, pêle-mêle avec le bétail, semblent reprocher à la nature de ne les avoir pas habillés de même. L'Esclave qui leur a donné le jour, verroit tranquillement brûler sa chaumiere, parce que rien n'est à lui. Il ne scauroit dire, 'mon champ, mes enfans, ma femme.' Tout appartient au Seigneur, qui peut vendre également le laboureur & le boeuf. Il est rare de vendre des femmes; parce que ce sont elles qui multiplient le troupeau; population misérable; le froid en tue une grande partie."61

The first picture, that of striking children, chills the reader, especially when it is Poland in a mother image who is being cruel. Their poverty is graphically underlined by mentioning bare feet in severe climate, unprotected by the rough hut. Several parallel images of the peasants and beasts clearly show their miserable existance: "bétail", selling "le laboureur et le boeuf", the women multiply "le troupeau". The absence of possessions seems to stress the impossibility of changing sociological strata, and to take away any desire for work. The incomplete phrase, "misérable population", audibly confirms what is already apparent. The final suggestion that the cold kills off those which the lord does not closes the paragraph with an ugly image in the reader's mind. Cruelty to children, and kicking a helpless man are the prevailing, pitiful scenes painted.

Reality in descriptions came easily to his pen. Coyer used long or short sentences to achieve a passionate or a chillingly dry effect. He used the <u>passé simple</u> to pass rapidly over facts. Battle scenes jumped to life in a present tense. Modifiers for verbs and nouns, more frequent than in previous works but still used sparingly, render the word modified more alive by dint of their rarity of appearance.

Also used with moderation are Coyer's metaphors. He uses fire images throughout. They primarily represent war. Only a few metaphors were <u>précieux.</u>

> "Deux anciennes Maisons...ont posé les premieres pierres dans la nuit des siecles."62

For the most part, the abbé showed originality in personification, metaphor, simile, synecdoche, and other poetic methods of expression.

> (simile): "On...regardoit [Jaques Sobieski] comme le bouclier de la liberté."63
>
> (metaphor): "Les hommes ressemblent aux fruits qui attendent la saison pour se développer."64
>
> "Leurs corps servirent de pature aux Vautours."65
>
> (personification): "Dès qu'il eut recouvré ses forces, la vengeance & la gloire lui parlerent également."66
>
> "Chaque jour brisoit quelqu'anneau des chaines de la Nation."67
>
> (synesthesia): "Une noire mélancolie le consumoit."68

The circumlocution which he used in the following example was necessary for <u>bienséance</u> in his recounting of a tale already questionable in eighteenth century polite society by its gory, horrific nature.

> "On arrachoit les dents à ceux qui avoient mangé la viande dans le Carême; qu'on suspendoit un adultere ou un fornicateur à un clou par l'instrument de son crime, & qu'on mettoit un rasoir auprès de lui, avec la liberté de s'en servir pour se dégager ou de mourir dans cette torture."69

For once, Coyer did not feel compelled to oversimplify through excessive explanation.

Other traces of previous stylistic devices are apparent. The two volumes of <u>Sobieski</u> are divided into nine small sections which he calls books. This method always worked well for Coyer, whether in short pamphlets which he eventually

turned into a unit, or within a single work (eg., Plaisir pour le peuple.) Some traits, which can be classified as didactic, were found here too. The author often warns "I tell you this because..." or "I omit this because..." seemingly in justification of his methodology. Over and over he tries to convince the reader of his veracity and non-opinionated factual exposition. The former moralistic preaching is gone, or rather, condensed to aphoristic phrases or simple psychoanalysis:

> "...les Cosaques: ceux-ci plus acarnés, parce que le ressentiment d'une grande injure est plus dévorant que l'envie des conquêtes."70
>
> "Les Rois oublieroient qu'ils sont hommes, s'ils étoient toujours heureux."71
>
> "Les hommes devroient apprendre à se livrer de meilleure grace à la destinée."72

This history was psychologically difficult for Coyer to rationalize because it praised and criticized three important areas at the same time. He lauded the nobility, specifically the Leczinskis, the Turennes, and in general noble expression and comportment, yet he never missed a chance to show injustice in the nobles. By raising the quality of the life of the peasants and giving them ruling power through suffrage, he would take away from the nobility. At every step he rebelled against the Church, but in his own life he never abandoned the habit, doubtlessly because it was useful to him. In view of the number of toes he stepped on in his history of Sobieski, one can say that he was much safer in his nationalistic pieces, even though they were historical,

Written between the Religions Grecque et Romaine and Sobieski were the two small Dissertations sur le vieux mot de Patrie; et dissertation sur la nature du peuple. They are historical in that each traces the derivation of the terms in question. They are moral in tone, because Coyer strictly bound morality to service for one's country. They are nationalistic by their very definitions. They show the changes in Coyer's style as he drops away from the marivaux and leans toward Sobieski. Their subject matter suggests what will be Coyer's first literary devotion: his country.

The tone is salon-like and very reminiscent of the constant source of first concern: singular and elegant, and displeasure. The effect of his research is only superficially evident in developing the terms and ideas. There is still evidence of superstition, repetitions, and intrusions of personal statures. A half literary allusions [illegible] a minimum, and even when they were well explained. [illegible] and the first section of the pamphlet, he praises his country as the best in Europe in all respectives, and says, "Si on a la chose, pourquoi ne pas avoir le mot?"[illegible] The overall effect is overelaboration. The same term is fitting to describe the second section on "le peuple", which possesses the same faults. Its redeeming feature is the ending which suggests a voltairian twist that, if used in the body of the work, might have dissolved the sugary outcomes by a elegant style.

> "Le peuple est donc composé d'hommes. Mais il est à propos qu'il l'ignore toujours, & je ne le dis qu'aux riches, aux grands & aux ministres, qui pourront comme auparavant abuser de l'ignorance du peuple."74

These small pamphlets, while picking up some of the worst traits Coyer demonstrated in the Bagatelles still belong in the transitional period in all aspects. They led to full-bodied, well written history in Sobieski. They are examples of the burning drive to help his nation which spans Coyer's whole career. Chronologically following Patrie and Peuple are the Noblesse commerçante and its Défense, easily Coyer's key to what small amount of gloire endured past his own century. Between the Noblesse commerçante and De la prédication, Chinki, Etrennes, Plan d'éducation, and the translation of Blackstone's criminal code of England (which together represent the body of the abbé's patriotic works), appear more "philosophical" publications. At the end of his career, he returns to moralising. It is fitting that his career and publications follow closely the pyramid pattern which he so often used in his literary style, the "philosophical" period being at the apex of all his desires and achievements.

All six nationalistic publications follow the same basic approach. They tell, mostly in detail, what is wrong with the existing systems, and propose a plan for their amelioration. Aside from that point, each one is entirely different in its pattern and style. Noblesse and its Défense

are straightforward in subject matter, always serious, rather apologetic at times, and bitingly caustic at others. Prédication pretends to be a sermon and it preaches, ending surprisingly with a very incomplete and unrealisable plan whereby the government should be able to control and correct the mores of a nation. Chinki is a philosophical tale which parabolically shows what is wrong with the professional control-groups. Solution to the problems is only hinted, but criticism abounds. On the other hand, Plan d'éducation is only a sketch, but expressed in a way which suggests what prompted the outline. Etrennes is humorous, sarcastic and while offering ridiculous plans for the bettering of what it criticized, makes serious suggestions as well. Blackstone is merely a translation, accompanied by the hope that the reader will use this model to make his own table of reform. The subjects each treats are as different as their approach: commerce, morality, trade unions, education, public salubrity, and penal code. As a group, the nationalistic works are more admirable literarily than the "philosophical" ones. Speaking only of the evolution in style, the disproportion between the dissertations on "patrie" and "peuple" and the Noblesse commerçante is incomparable. It is amazing that such discrepancy in literary ability can appear in contiguous works, separated by only a year's time.

The Noblesse commerçante represents Coyer's best written, most convincing and most confident piece. He avoids

all humor and sarcasm. The most important stylistic question here is the methods he uses to pose his arguments and successfully convince the reader that the answers which he has provided for them are the correct ones. To achieve this, the abbé has skimmed the best of his devices from previous works that also shared numerous stylistic faults. The repetitions and lists are held to an absolute minimum and used to reinforce, add speed, or nail home a difficult proposition. Questions, rhetorical and answered, are as abundant as ever, but are not out of place in this exposition, because their result is a convincing dialogue between the author and imaginary adversaries (who soon became real). The dialogues and questions and answers can be convincing because it is Coyer himself who chose them, and therefore had all the time he needed to prepare the responses or attacks, which always end in his favor. A new technique is that he often allows the reader to answer the questions himself. He uses ancient and Biblical allurions sparingly and chooses carefully the ones he uses. Coyer has by now realized that his best technique is the division of his material into small manageable compartments, which he uses in the Noblesse and especially in the Défense. Although total departure from la morale is out of the question, it appears only in relation to the main question: commerce. Joined to this need to purge is his use of adages--here again used minimally. All are devices to convince the reader.

> "Le premier qui ait dit, qu'il vaudroit mieux faire des riens que de ne rien faire, connoissoit bien les dangers de l'oisiveté."[75]
>
> "C'étoit une maxime des anciens chinois que, s'il y avoit un homme qui ne labourat point, quelqu'un souffroit la faim dans l'empire."[76]
>
> "Qui est le Maître de la mer, est le Maître de tout."[77]

Also previously used, and here for the same reason, are the present and future tenses which maintain a sense of immediacy and topicality. They also tend to establish a closer rapport between author and reader, when combined with a conversational style.

The friendly atmosphere very obviously projected, is one of the techniques Coyer uses to convince. He talks directly to the reader. He includes himself in the first person plural verbs throughout. Just as frequent are first person singular verbs. He renders his exposition more personal with parenthetical expressions and conversational exclamations such as: "La Guerre, il est vrai,..."[78] or "...un coeur Citoyen, (qualité bien rare),..."[79] or "Eh bien!"[80] Coyer also adds to the conversational atmosphere by presenting fictitious dialogues between a father and son, for example, and by directly answering the quotations he has cited, as though the other author were making his statement in person. These authors were familiar to Coyer, because he had widely researched the question before beginning to write. If he could back up his own statement by a similar idea from someone famous, then his own was more credible.

Coyer chose his examples as carefully as his citations, with the intent to win his argument: neighboring countries, especially England, Holland and Italy, whose commerce enriched their nation, stand as an example for France, whom he considers infinitely richer in natural resources. The abbé's devices for drawing the reader to his side are clever. He states what he could do, if he wanted, to convince the observer. He could use the observer's arguments against him.[81] Coyer insists he will not resort to this, but in reality that is precisely what he does. Another device is psychologically to couch the desired effect in pleasing vocabulary.

> "/la Noblesse/ trouvera /dans le commerce/ la conservation & l'amélioration de ses terres, l'agrandissement de ses possessions, l'affermissement de ses droits, la sureté de ses priviléges, la considération de ses vassaux, l'éducation et l'établissement de ses enfans. Que faut-il pour tout cela? Des richesses. Le Commerce les donne."[82]

The simple, short conclusion is the final and necessary point that the reader needs to admit to himself that that is what he had been wanting all along. "Richesse" is a constant ploy, tantalizing the poor nobleman. Another convincing method is to assume an undesirable situation, like war, and prove how the nobility could profit more from commerce.[83] Coyer proved his arguments by statistics from Vauban[84] and figures that he calculated himself.

> "Supposons donc que trente mille Gentilshommes seulement, enrichis par le Commerce, dépensent trois livres de plus chaque jour, voilà une consommation pour cent neuf millions cinq cens mille livres par an; & de cette consommation quel accroissement de subsistance pour un peuple de cultivateurs & d'artisans?"[85]

Coyer, not content with his own arguments and fictitious ones, pits Montesquieu and Vauban against each other, and draws conclusions favorable to his own discussion.[86] A forced device, which nonetheless was successful, was in stating what someone did not say, as proof to his argument.

> "Ni le Marquis de Lassay, ni le Président de Montesquieu, n'ont avancé que le Commerce déshonoreroit la Noblesse."[87]

The most surprising and efficacious method of all was in proving to the reader, he who opposed Coyer's plan, that he was already engaged in commerce.

> "Mais oublié-je que vous commercez déjà sans vous en appercevoir?"[88]

Most of these methods are new to Coyer's style. Their bases, in each case, are reason and logic. When opposition began to appear, Coyer was prepared for it, and was more confident than ever in his teacher-like retorts.

Coyer has divided the Défense into small sections according to the primary disagreements to his plan. He answers them, not succinctly, in a more impersonal way, more "on" and less "nous" and "je". The sentences are longer, devoid of colorful images, and tend to ramble, rarely adding anything new to the Noblesse. Looking at the Noblesse and the Défense as a unit, aside from the advances Coyer made in variety of approach, psychological slants in presentation, and the general tidying up of careless redundancies, three stylistic devices stand out as improvements in his literary evolution.

The author seemed brusquely to recognize the value of descriptive adjectives to render his images more striking. He opposed a "Noblesse brillante" to a "Noblesse obscure"[89] to explain visually how the nobility was falling into ruins, in other words, "cette Noblesse enchaînée par l'indigence..."[90] The idea of being in chains made the notion of mobility impossible, and Coyer cemented his notion by a passive construction. He showed them in a "indigne servitude".[91] Both noun and adjective were counter to everything the nobleman was supposed to symbolise. Coyer capitalizes on the fact that riches were often the pièce de résistence for a class slowly losing all grasp on its remaining wealth. To prevent the idea "commerce yields wealth" from descending to the crass financial debasement of filthy lucre, Coyer made sure his readers understood that commerce "amène des richesses innocentes que personne ne censure."[92] He made the noble's sapped power visible in "épée inutile".[93] Deceiving nature so as not to have any offspring, Coyer called "funeste leçon de la misère!"[94] Closely related to these expressive adjectives are the images and metaphors in which they are found.

The abbé uses his metaphors either to crown commerce or to depict graphically the miserable state of the nobility. Commerce becomes "une planche dans le naufrage,"[95] the tree of life,[96] a tree whose branches are so prodigious that they are within everyman's reach.[97] Along with the powerful, protecting tree, Coyer paints his subject as the everflowing

milk from the breast of a nourrice.[98] It is curious that he did not suggest a mother's milk instead, since he considered it harmful to both mother and child when a wet-nurse was called in to suckle a baby. The metaphor of "une mine qui donne toujours à ceux qui fouillent,"[99] fits in with the attachment to riches, but is weaker and less picturesque than the preceding ones. He is more graphic in showing a miserable, helpless nobility.

With piquant, unexaggerated scenes, Coyer is the most convincing.

> "...cette Noblesse enchaînée par l'indigence, sur qui le soleil ne se lève que pour éclairer sa misere, & qui n'a point d'ailes pour voler aux récompenses..."100

> "...ces armoiries rongées par le temps..."[101]

At times he merely describes.

> "Eût-il mieux valu que ce Gentilhomme fut resté dans la fange d'un petit Fief, avec une épée inutile & dans un Celibat forcé qui n'auroit pas même le mérite de psalmodier pour les Fidèles."102

In one sentence the abbé has attributed to them the disadvantages of the military and the Church, and at the same time couched what remained, their land, in a strong, unpleasant light, finalized by the imperfect subjunctive. Most of the time he speaks directly to the nobles who are at the distinct disadvantage of not being able to answer him on the spot.

> "Vos femmes vous demandent une subsistance décente, vos enfans de l'éducation & des établissemens: est-ce en remuant les cendres de vos ancêtres que vous trouverez des trésors pour remplir ces devoirs sacrés?"103

Home, food, and education of his family were the noble's principle concerns. Coyer showed him helpless before the ghosts of his ancestors as well as before his own family. His main competition in advertising commerce was the military. Rather unfairly,he presents a speech by the sons who are left at home when the father can only afford a military post for his eldest.

> "Vous nous avez prechés dès le berceau que nous ne devions espérer ni bien ni considération que par la guerre & les périls: nous avons appris de bonne heure à jurer, à quereller, à insulter tout ce qui n'est pas noble, à manier les armes, à tirer sur les gardes de la chasse voisine, à dévaster des bleds, à estropier des paysans, à confondre le droit avec la force; nous nous sommes fait des ames de tigres, nous voilà tout formés pour la guerre...Que faire de nos épées, tandis que nous n'avons d'autre ennemi que la faim?"104

Here is a good example of effective use of what had previously resulted in singsong dullness. Repetitiun of the preposition <u>à</u> followed by an infinitive fixes the ideas, intensifies their effect, and maintains an unchangeable attitude through their impersonalness. The choice of pejorative verbs (swear, quarrel, insult, devastate), followed the ruin of what should have remained desirable and beneficial ("bleds", "paysans", "droit"), was more convincing, negatively, than preaching or moralizing would have been.

The style of <u>De la prédication</u> is radically different from the <u>Noblesse commerçante</u>, especially since preaching and moralizing play the major roles. His contemporaries entirely misunderstood the purpose of the pamphlet. They

felt it was an open attack against any effort towards preaching since Coyer pointed out how no preacher from the beginning of time had ever been able to make any progress towards correcting mankind.

Coyer himself preaches, and admits it. He alternates between being dry, seemingly frightening in the cold reporting of the horrors of evil that had taken place through the centuries, and being passionate and threatening. For his historical documentation, the author chose the most evil epochs in Biblical history. The overall atmosphere is pessimistic. He does not hesitate to debunk any category of individuals from poets to prophets. In continuing to outline by examples the evil of the centuries, he channels his line of thinking into French history (eg., Clovis, Charlemagne) and parallels these lives with those of famous leaders from others countries, as if to prove that it was not his country alone which could not succeed. The development of preaching (or lack of it) throughout all ages up to his own is a section by itself.

The following compartment treats the effect of preaching in other religions. A very strongly worded personal statement makes it easy to understand why his readers called him an atheist after this.

> "Je voudrois bien savoir par quelle fatalité il est arrivé, que la prédication eu plus d'energie pour le mal que pour le bien dans toutes les Religions."105

He does not leave this as an empty clucking of the tongue; rather, he finds proof in his own religion: the crusades, the Albigensians, League massacres--all inspired by preaching.

The third section which demonstrates the inefficacy of the preacher covers literature. Poets were divinely inspired, but they failed, as did tragedians. Here, though, he has less patience, for writers of tragedy have two elements at their command which Coyer considered essential, terror and pity, especially abundant in the comédie larmoyante. Coyer tries both elements in his essay in order to convince. For terror, he threatens the readers with damnation. His pity is mostly for the peuple, who receive no benefits at all from society. Still going from the general to the specific, Coyer concerns his next section with the philosophes.

While the philosophes have failed as well as all previously mentioned groups to instill goodness, they remain pristine in comparison, for these men will be the abbé's tool in his ultimate plan. He dully lists their capabilities, all phrases simple, beginning with il and followed by a present tense verb. The result is as unadorned as an outline, and hardly more interesting. Although Coyer wrote De la prédication nearly ten years after the Noblesse, he has lapsed back into former bad habits, and has not profited from the new devices he had used since the Noblesse. One trait, well developed in his intervening "philosophical" pieces, is apparent,-causticity,-but is is without sting. Now that he has presented the philosophes as that body he considers capable of successfully preaching, he is ready to discuss the main question, around which he should have built

his entire essay, but which, instead, was totally obfuscated by a misunderstood, exaggerated introduction.

"Quel sera donc le vrai Prédicateur? Le GOUVERNEMENT."[106] Even at the apex of his buildup, Coyer resorted to the oversimplification of a question, followed by his own answer, the same overextended effect remaining from the Bagatelles. He should now be actively explaining his plan, but instead he has found another outlet for a criticism of mores, more bitter, less amusing than before. When he resorted to his usual technique of proof by citing the ancients, he weakly inserts an imaginary complaint, and his answer to it, neither of which is as clever as he would have wanted.

> "Quoi! toujours des Romains & des Grecs" ne cessera-t-on pas de nous ennuyer de leur sagesse? Pardon, je croyais, à vos moeurs, que jamais on ne vous en avoit parlé."[107]

Contrary to the triteness of the above citation is his recounting of an imaginary dream. It appears to be a combination of the technique of le Rêve de d'Alembert and the visual formation of Voltaire's Le Siècle de Louis XIV.

> "Occupé profondément, il y a quelques jours, & fatigué de l'objet que je traite, je m'endormis; & je vis en rêve une pyramide vivante. La base en étoit immense, C'étoit un grand peuple. Les autres Ordres, la diminuant de superficie, & en augmentant de splendeur, se surmontoient en distances marquées par le mérite. Le Gouvernement dominoit au sommet. Tout étoit dans un mouvement régulier, tout s'agitoit pour s'élever à un dégre supérieur ou pour ne pas tomber...Ce qui me charmoit le plus dans ce grand spectacle, c'est que la source des biens couloit sans cesse, tandis que celle des maux étoit presqu'arrêtée. Je m'éveillai & tout disparut."108

This dream stands as one of two highlights in the second half of the essay, one of which is the ending. And yet this too fails to save the work from deserved harsh criticism. It lacks Diderot's vivacious complexity, and the broad-sweeping panorama of Voltaire's studied historical masterpiece. It is not the simplicity of Coyer's ideas which are reprehensible, but rather their unimaginative presentation. Throughout the paragraph, however, there is an incessant undulation which does not exist elsewhere, (eg., "pyramide vivante", "un mouvement regulier", "tout s'agitoit", "s'élever", "tomber", "prenoit des forces", "répandu".) Coyer should have learned to replace his stable infinitives by conjugated verbs, and his intangible concepts by more metaphors like the few which leaped to the reader's eye by their singularity in his historical works, especially Sobieski. His final paragraph is his best because it achieves these two things: the mood he set out to portray bounds forward successfully, and his style is its most accomplished in two hundred pages.

His words embody a passion and portray and preview a revolution both by their action and ideas.

> "...jusqu'à ce que le peuple ne voyant plus rien à respecter dans les riches & dans les grands, les insulte, les trouble dans leurs possessions, & les dépouille; jusqu'à ce que tous les Ordres de l'Etat se heurtent les uns contre les autres avec le poids de tous les vices, brisent tous les liens des loix & de la concorde, jusqu'au moment enfin où il ne restera ni justice, ni honnêteté, ni conseil, ni force, ni courage. C'est alors peut-être qu'une Nation barbare ou policée depuis peu, mais

> moins corrompue, viendra le fer à la main, vous donner ses loix et ses moeurs. Tel fut le sort de l'Empire Romain & de tous les Etats, lorsque tout fut corrompu."109

The central theme is that corruption leads to ruin because preventive measures become impossible. There is a crescendo of violence, led by three "jusqu'à" conjunctions. He goes from the general ("le peuple") to the specific ("l'état"), to the abstract ("justice", "honneteté", "courage", etc.). The violence begins slowly with the present participle "ne voyant plus rien", and hurls itself into three present tense verbs, all preceded by the direct object pronoun "les", which suggest increased revolutionary action: "insulte" "trouble" "dépouille". The middle phrase begun by "jusqu'à" shows trouble in total command because the central agents of the entire State are in conflict with each other, not merely the insubordination of a lower class to an upper. His metaphor attributing weight to vices, carries through the idea of violence by breaking the bonds which unite law, justice, and order, and metamorphosing them into discord. The third section slows down the action by a break with "enfin", and brings the revolution to a gradual stop by the repeated negatives "ni" (five times). At a dead halt, Coyer projects a thoughtful and thought-provoking half-threat, half-prediction, that a barbarous and policed nation, both frightening concepts for his France, might force subjugation, their power being their purity, i.e., lack of corruption. The real threat is in a moralistic rumination

of what really happened to others in the same situation in the past, factually stated in a passé simple. It was undoubtedly Montesquieu's De la grandeur et décadence des Romains that inspired the final example, and it was well chosen, for many of his readers would be familiar enough with the contemporary work so that further description and explanation were unnecessary.

An overall look at De la prédication shows two distinctly different and unequal portions. The first was moralistically passionate and damning. The second was placid in contrast, and not convincing in its uninspiring and unrealizable plan. His next attempt at reform was again in a wholly different approach. Chinki, l'histoire cochinchinoise is a philosophical tale designed to ameliorate by exposing in a parable. He does not propose a corrective outline, but sows the seeds for reform negatively.

The negative picture appears in the adventures of a wise, considerate father who, seeking positions for his son and daughter, accompanies them from job to job and points out in each the problems involved in breaking into a métier. In Chinki, Coyer has realized and put to work his best stylistic qualities. He divides the story into small chapters of a couple of pages each, with one problem per chapter. The story advances rapidly. There is much physical action and much dialogue, both of which add life to the exposition. Alternation between conversational present tense and narrative

passé simple gives the strange effect of constantly reminding the reader that this is a tale, while at the same time forcing his participation in the dialogues. The passé simple ossifies the wrongs that Coyer is depicting, while the present tense conversation causes them to be more credible, more real and urgent. The abbé has not put aside his repetitions. By repeating the same phrase, he stresses the impossibility of the situation, beginning each speech with the Marchande de modes, "Maudite maitrise". Near the end of his pamphlet, he psychologically urges the reader to agree with him by continually stating his displeasure.

Another repetition, but one which does not succeed, becomes tiresome by the end of the pamphlet. As Chinki and his children visit one profession after another, the problems and conversations all become similar. Rather than force like situations upon his reader, although professions had changed, Coyer should have maintained the terseness with which he started out, and worked in the remaining professions in a single chapter using a different approach.

Regarding syntax, Chinki is similar to Découverte de l'isle frivole. Unadorned nouns and verbs hasten the exposition.

> "Il fut cherché, aisément découvert, car il ne se cachoit pas, & emprisonné."110

In one single sentence Coyer has painted very simply, by verbs alone--no images, no digressions, no descriptions, no details--an action that took place over a considerable

amount of time. The lack of metaphorical color is constant. In one of few images he gives, Coyer once again betrays overtones of sexual preoccupation.

> "C'est donner aux femmes le marteau & l'aiguille aux hommes."111

The opposite of Chinki, concerning modifiers, style in general, and mood is Etrennes aux morts et aux vivans ou Projet utile partout où l'on est mortel.

This pamphlet is composed of two small chapters of unequal size and importance. It is humorous and straightforward. The first sentence sets up the scaffolding for what will follow:

> "Tout le monde connoît les inconvenients qui résultent de l'établissement des cimetières au milieu de Paris; et le voeu général des Vivans est qu'on choisisse loin de cette Ville une résidence pour les Morts."112

From then on, the author sets about discussing the present situation in a humorous manner and tells how it could be modified or changed. Humor in this situation was necessary because of the unpleasant topic of death.

The vehicle for Coyer's humor is circumlocution or riduculous situations and proposals. With his habitual molieresque opinions on doctors, Coyer describes their main duty:

> "Comme il seroit dangéreux...de distraire les anciens Médecins de leurs travaux, qui tendent sans cesse à expédier des Voyageurs par le Coche funéraire..."113

Another example of humorous metaphor is his definition of priests as "des Etres accoutumés au repos & à l'inaction."[114]

Perhaps the most biting jibe at the religious is at the Pope. To avoid the delay of time and the expense of energies, Coyer proposes that an easier way to tell if a person were worthy of sainthood, would be if their bodies remained untouched after an hour in the cremation oven.

> "Car le témoignage de quatre Philosophes modernes, qui attesteroient le fait, voudroit bien l'assertion d'un seul homme qui peut être faillible en jugeant les choses à cinq cent lieues de lui."115

Both adjectives and adverbs add to the color of his exposition. While he achieves the development here as quickly as he did in Chinki, the difference in the reader's overall picture is because of the modifiers.

> "Les Squelettes ne doivent être admis que dans les Cloîtres de Chartreux, de Capucins, & dans d'autres maisons contemplatives, où l'on fait profession de mourir de son vivant, pour l'édification d'un Public ingrat qui traite cette résolution d'extravagance, & ne voit dans ces solitudes, que les tombeaux du bon sens, ou les antres de l'ignorance."116

It is not only the antithetical ideas such as skeletons and monks, "mourir de son vivant", tombs for good sense, that make the passage remarkable, but also the consistency of images tinged with his graveyard humor, and the ridiculous suggestion he is making. He obviously includes himself in the ungrateful public who does not appreciate the wasted, sequestered existences of these celibates who could be serving their fellowman.

Poking fun at the religious is not new for Coyer, but questioning the existence of the soul, more covertly

but more profoundly than he did in the Lettre au R. P. Berthier, is surprising at this stage in his life, when he begins to look back on his past and seek out more routinely acceptable religious beliefs and practices. Coyer refers to the soul as "cette substance volatile, dont tout le monde parle, & que personne n'a jamais vue."[117] The contrast appears again in this metaphor when he refers to the soul as a substance, but one which is evaporating. That he calls it matter indicates his century's usual scientific view of things. When he questions its real existence--no one has ever seen it--Coyer is examining in habitual eighteenth century philosophical pyrrhonism. The manner in which he doubts is partial proof that his implication is correct (no one has seen it, therefore...). He builds the entire image around the adjective "volatile". On other occasions, he accumulates modifiers to compose a mood.

In the following sentence Coyer repeats three superlatives constructed similarly in words and ideas (le plus + odor), and destroys the ridiculous picture by the same words (plus + odor) turned negative.

> "La Coquette la plus musquée, le Petit-Maître le plus parfumé, le Courtisan le plus chargé d'amare & d'eaux de senteur, ne conservent plus rien de leurs bonnes odeurs, après la dissolution de leurs parties."[118]

Coyer had little tolerance for injustice, particularly regarding that select group of which he considered himself a member. In one sentence, the author used more adjectives

than in entire pages of preceding works. His choice of words (nouns, adjectives and verbs) shows his passion and the violence of his convictions.

> "L'orgueil du Philosophe indigent humilié par cette cruelle inégalité, qui met entre les hommes un intervalle qu'on ne peut combler qu'avec de l'or, se plairoit dans la contemplation de la barque fatale."119

He opposes pride and humiliation and introduces a cause with several effects, all of which compose a kind of onomatopoetic, visceral reaction. Coyer demonstrated a keen ear for phonetic effect. All the primary words begin with vowels and could orally be rendered staccato by a glottal stop; ("orgueil", "indigent", "humilié", "inégalité", "intervalle", "or"). The first and last are tempered by the eliding definite article, and begin with the liquid construction "or-", to complete the verbal pyramid. The cause ("indigent") and the effects ("inégalité", "intervalle") are in alliteration also, and again form a parallel construction of two like nasals ("in-") which encompass an oral vowel of the same orthography, another example of contrast ("i-né-"). The adjective "cruelle", as it precedes "inégalité", adds strength to its meaning by its position and by the harsh composition of the stop combination "cr-" plus the shrill, high vowel [y]. The adjective "fatale" describing the funeral boat prepares for the personification and a change of metaphors, death as an unreal, stage-like quality.

> "Il n'y découvriroit qu'un sombre théâtre, où la Nature amene des acteurs pour les dépouiller de leurs rôles que le hazard donne à d'autres, auxquels elle prépare le même dénouement."120

The images are consistent (theater, actors, roles, dénouement). But the words "sombre" and "dépouiller" are incongruous with the theater, while in keeping with death. Coyer should have ended his paragraph here, with the reader divining the final justice for the mistreated and misunderstood. Instead, he continues with his customary oversimplification that ends in an unnecessary pitying, instead of the recuperation of lost dignity.

> "Il n'y verroit qu'une douce voiture pour passer dans un pays inconnu, & souriroit à la pensée qu'il l'habitera quelque jour avec les grands & les riches qui l'ont peu considérés, & qu'il y aura surement la prééminence sur eux."121

This final thought is bitter and childlike, a little too much the image of "L'Embarquement pour Cythère" to an underworld with a glorified Charon and a symbolical Styx which resembles more closely the blue Danube. As if on a see-saw of originality and redundancy, Coyer completely changes in Plan d'éducation publique.

The Plan is dull, unoriginal, and moralizing, but useful and necessary. In his general views on public education, Coyer begins a series of contradictions with himself. He divides his plan into two main sections regarding body (physical education) and soul (moral instruction). The

large role of the soul, which he had previously questioned if not denied, is the first contradiction. The second involves nature.

> "...ses facultés, corporelles & spirituelles, demandent à sortir de l'engourdissement où la Nature, qui ne fait rien tout-à-coup, les produit."[122]

Formerly, Nature was for Coyer the untouchable purity which fought against the corruption of the world and yielded wisdom and common sense. As a return to his early traits as a writer, the Plan is excessively moralizing and prolix.

The long work could be cut to one-third and still be a useful synthesis. Whole paragraphs are preaching and verbose, and should have been eliminated.

> "Meres, qui n'êtes point Meres, puisque vous refusez à vos enfans le lait que la Nature vous donna pour les nourrir; puisque du moins vous ne les faites pas allaiter sous vos yeux, lorsque la fortune vous le permet; Nourrices imbecilles, qui par les entraves où vous les mettrez, empêchez le jeu de la machine humaine, & le développement des forces; Peres nonchalans ou faibles, qui n'avez ni le zêle, ni le courage de prescrire à des épouses ou à des nourrices ce qu'elles doivent faire, vous vous avertissez de hâter l'institution publique pour arrêter le mal."[123]

This harangue, one single sentence, has little to do with the development of Coyer's plan. It demonstrates the aging abbé's impatience with anything he considers wrong, and his reluctance to couch these same complaints, now some twenty-five years old for him, in his former flowery, transparent disguises. The preceding two sentences are equally as rambling, and return to the redundancy of the lists which plagued

the Bagatelles. Within the short span of one page, Coyer lists prepositional phrases: "sans maillot, sans bandages, sans ligature, sans gene, sans compression"; infinitives preceded by de: "de se tourner..., d'étendre..., de ramper, de n'être..."; subjects: "tout cela...tout cela"; and negatives: "...ni bossus, ni boiteux, ni cagneux, ni noués, ni rachitiques."[124] Along with his old characteristics he shows some new ones.

In true outline form Coyer divides the Plan into three parts, each with chapters, and articles. Sometimes the divisions are even smaller and are denoted by numbers. The last section, on the constitution of the courses of study by class, the form is almost strictly elaborated outline. Here, finally, digressions, harangues, and personal comments are kept to a minimum. Throughout the plan, Coyer inserts quotations from other authors on public education when he feels he cannot improve on the citation by paraphrasing.

The fact that the abbé willingly uses large numbers of quotations is significant. In his first pamphlets he often borrowed from other authors, and just as often did not mention that the ideas were not his own. In the preface to the Plan, he states openly that he will quote others when he feels that they have stated something better than he could. In the body of the quotation,he tells who the author is, and from which work it came. It is almost with resignation mingled with humility that he openly renounces

originality. This method prepares the way for his final work on public service, the translation of Blackstone, where the entire work is that of another author.

Because the Blackstone translation is not Coyer's work *per se*, I shall not treat it from the point of view of style, but shall mention it in the overall development and changes in his approach. Appearing nearly at the end of his literary career, it shows a discouraged but still determined writer, concerned with the wrongs of France's penal system, but not energetic enough to incorporate his thoughts into a more original form.

This publication plus Coyer's account of his travels to Italy and Holland, and his observations on England all reflect passively on things past, observed and remembered, and finally reported in concrete form. The epistolary travel accounts show a younger man, even though they were published many years after the trips. He probably wrote them in rough form at the time of occurrence, and merely edited and published them as an old man, at a time when more original pieces did not appear. As a result, they show a strange agglomeration of every previous stage in Coyer's stylistic development, and offer nothing striking either in ideas or images. He is sometimes serious, sometimes puckish; now moralizing, now risqué. There are fire metaphors and examples of preciosity, colorful modifiers followed by staid paragraphs of pure narration. Chronologically, these

publications give a false picture of the man who wrote them, an uncharacteristic penultimate appearance.

His last piece, Carême entier, shows the final changes, the end of his career. With this exception, a sweeping glance at Coyer's works shows a beginning and an end that were frivolous and lightly moralizing. His historical works were scattered in the entire middle period. Beside the beginning and end, encompassing the histories, were his works showing dedication to service for his country. They were of more solid composition and showed improvements in writing. At the apex of his career are the "philosophical" pamphlets. It is here that a wholly different Coyer emerges, and demonstrates an ability to compete successfully with those who bore his coveted title.

In each of his philosophical works Coyer stands face to face with celebrated philosophes. The Lettre au R. P. Berthier sarcastically pretends that the two are friends, while Coyer chips away at his fellow religious' debunking of materialism. It is an attack. Discours sur la satyre contre les philosophes does not even feign friendship with Palissot. Instead, Coyer wages serious and reasonable arguments against the evil effects of Palissot's Les Philosophes. This pamphlet is likewise an attack. Lettre au Docteur Maty is a defense rather than an attack. Like Berthier, it pretends to be interested in one phase, i.e., defense of the Doctor's veracity in his report on the giants,

while in reality Coyer's main concern is to fabricate an ideal society which portrays a philosophical haven. Maty is comparable to Isle frivole in construction but contrary in ideas. All three show a boldness on the part of the author. Berthier and Maty were published abroad, but Satyre appeared in the Œuvres as early as 1758. The censors considered Berthier so dangerous that it was condemned and burned by the public executioner. This severe reprimand cooled off Coyer's pen considerably. It is a pity, for Berthier is the most voltairian and the most cleverly written of all three.

Pushing aside occasional overexplanation and overextension of a good point, it is possible to see an astutely handled, almost dadaistic manipulation of disconnected words and ideas to yield a single train of thought. What is literarily artistic is the total mastery of a fast-moving discussion, or rather monologue, for Coyer never gives Berthier a chance to reply or defend himself. The author dupes and ridicules Berthier through a series of logically false, although convincing reasonings. As usual, Coyer calls on the ancients as he begins his history of materialism. This time, however, he uses all quotations out of context, as did Berthier, in order to prove that materialism has existed since the beginning of time and is located everywhere.

Greek philosophers found the soul in atoms, the heart, the blood, the brain, in fire, air and numbers. Aristoxène, a "philosophe musicien", located it in the human organs,

"dans l'harmonie." "Musicien" and "harmonie" lead to a digression regarding music, that materialism under Louis XIV was a violin because one academician supposedly said to another, "Colletet! je vous trouve un plaisant violon!"[125] Extending the violin=man to a different meaning and century, the author cites an example of metonymy in which he refers to the musician as his instrument. "Cupis est un excellent violon."[126] Speaking of the player, Coyer talks about the soul of the violin. Here he has completed the unity of his thought by returning to the idea of soul, now attached to the secondary idea, violin. His conclusion is that even in his own century the "harmonie d'Aristoxène" exists. Changing to another approach, Coyer again finds safety from censorship in citing examples from the ancients to criticize his contemporaries, bound together with another kind of false logic. He continues a Paris/Athens analogy which he began earlier to unify the development. The abbé cites fictitious statements which prove the bond between the soul and materialism, and subtly suggests that certain specific Greek authors might have said them. He continues falsely to prove that currently one cannot distinguish between man and a trumpet, woman and a machine or a statue. From this trend of thought, he opens the question of animation, of attributing a soul to a painting or a statue. Semantics becomes an integral part in his battle. He asks whether it is not materialistic to refer to an author as "un diamant

brut enchassé dans du plomb", or for a mother to call her child "un bijou". He lists numerous expressions which depict man as an animal, e.g., "un poltron" as "un lièvre", or "un ignorant" as "un asne".[127] Still pounding in his topic by accepted contemporary examples, Coyer recalls a play in which a fairy and a girl see statues, clocks, and animals all in action. He puts words in Mirabeau's mouth regarding his _l'Ami des hommes_, when he says that Mirabeau called the whole French nation "Automates". "Si l'Auteur n'articule pas le mot d'_Automate_, il indique la chose."[128]

Coyer has gotten more and more excited in his proofs. Finally he forgets his logical (or illogical) development and harangues first his fellow citizens, then the author he was criticizing, and finally anyone who will listen to him. In his passion his tongue becomes quite sharp. Coyer, who has always defended the Jews, makes an anti-Jewish jibe at the author because of the abundance of Old Testament examples the man has used.

> "Il a un goût décidé pour l'_Ancien Testament_ dans toute sa vigueur, préférablement au _Nouveau_. Il Judaize complètement. Qui est-ce qui le circoncira?"[129]

The remark is beyond Coyer's habitual moderation and kindness, and is therefore uncharacteristic of his style. After several more examples, not different from his preceding ones, Coyer concludes by charging Berthier to stamp out materialism wherever he can find it, "même où il n'est pas."[130]

Coyer's personal complaints about certain criticisms against his own works led him away from his main topic, which he handled admirably, and into two or three petty tangents, markedly inferior to the rest of the article. These asides involve a criticism of Mirabeau's L'Ami des hommes and the abbé de Caverac's piece which praised the revocation of the Edit de Nantes. Coyer devoted as much space to these personal defenses as he did to Berthier and materialism. The result is very unequal, and the quality of what should have been a mordant satire was considerably weakened. There is no striking change in his syntax or language, i.e., few praiseworthy images and few blatant literary faults.

Discours sur la satyre contre les philosophes differs from Berthier in tone and animation. It is not different in language. This essay maintains an even, learned, semi-moralizing tone throughout and never gives in to passions, perhaps because it has nothing to do with Coyer personally. Coyer is not giving a criticism on the literary worth of Palissot's play. Rather, he is defending what he calls "public honesty". After subtly indicating that Palissot was not especially talented as a playwright, Coyer jumps immediately into a history of the public reaction to satirists in drama, or dramatic prose. By examples alone, from his friends the ancient Greek dramatists and the seventeenth century authors he admired, the abbé set out to show how experience taught authors not to humiliate either

individuals or the public as a whole by ridicule and venemous satire on the stage. Using Boileau, Molière and especially Aristophanes, Coyer shows how caricatures, buffoonery and satire were effectively used to correct vices and traits without wounding or insulting those corrected. Each of these authors tended to slip at one or another time, but realized the damage he had done and immediately corrected himself and his work. Coyer indirectly calls on Fallmet to profit from these examples to rectify the evil he has done to that worthy group of philosophes. How he achieved this is not spectacular.

The majority of Coyer's satyre is in the imperfect or passé simple tenses as he is recounting narrations from a past epoch. He purposely refrains from using a language so picturesque as to detract from the moral, although this simplicity is not unusual in his writings. Yet a style is fitting for the complete exposition of the development of ancient theater, as well as for the moralizing which he does unobtrusively in verse. There is obviously a large measure of prudence involved too, since satyre followed the condemned Berthier. Satyre shows Coyer to be as well read as he suggested in his earlier Dissertation sur deux anciennes religions. The latter work, however, was intended only to enlighten through the history of these religions, while the former is in defense of the philosophes' respect and pride. His attitude is not priestly, but almost fatherly in the way in which he insists on respect for antiqu

honesty. It is written as if by one apart, one who can see all from a perfectly objective vantage point and thereby render a wise, unchallengeable judgment. The philosophes made known their gratitude and respect for the author of Satyre, not for its literary qualities, but for the successful job of their defense.

Another defense which Coyer assumed, perhaps by request, was that of Dr. Maty, his fellow academician in the Royal Society. Maty, as indicated earlier, had published a report on Patagonian giants which the public in general and the other philosophes in particular were not prepared to accept. Just as Berthier, among other reasons, was a pretext for Coyer to refute criticisms against his own work, and De la prédication a pretext for his exposition of the ideal corrective device for corrupted moeurs, Lettre au Docteur Maty gave Coyer the opportunity to invent a background and develop an imaginary society whose government, leaders, and members formed a perfect organization, the model for all nations. In this publication as in Noblesse, Berthier, and others, the author's forte is in winning the reader over to his side.

Very stealthily the abbé makes general statements which indicate that he agrees with the public opinion. Then little by little, he begins to break away in order to prove an opposing idea. He maintains a light approach throughout, with a facade of seriousness.

> "Ce point de l'Histoire Naturelle /des géants patagons/ paroît mériter quelqu'attention, autant au moins que les coquilles & les papillons qui remplissent nos cabinets à la mode."[131]

Since at this moment, natural history was enjoying the apex of its popularity up till that time, Coyer attracted his readers by current interest as he did in the Bagatelles. But he subtly undercut the importance of the subject by his comparison to shell and butterfly collections. He relies on his usual method, history, to lay the foundation for his argument. With the realistic figures and dimensions of giants discovered by numerous explorers since the early sixteenth century, Coyer leaves no room for laymen to dispute scientific facts. He also gains confidence by placing himself on the very respected level not only of his readers, but also of Dr. Maty, who in a personal letter asked that Coyer justify his report.

Coyer defends him by using the same technique as he did in the Satyre, examples and logic. He cites numerous examples of oddities and aberrations already accepted by everyone: differences in sizes of dogs, cattle, and other animals; inherited qualities which the average man does not possess (eg., six fingers on one hand); men with different colors of skin, with or without beards, with huge legs as large as an average man's body. The natural and logical conclusion is then, why cannot there exist men nine feet tall?[132] Once he convinces his readers of the importance of a subject which they now accept as credible, he begins to justify his real purpose in writing, the exposition of the Patagonian society.

These justifications involve citations from Maupertuis as to the value of such a study ("leurs idées, leurs connoissances, leurs histoires"[133]), and Coyer's own weak supplication that "Il doit être permis à tout le monde de rêver, pourvu qu'on rêve en homme de bien."[134] The dream that he sketches is one in which justice, equality, honesty, virtue, good health, and family happiness triumph. It is the reverse version of life on the Frivolous Island.

Coyer introduces nothing new in his ideas. The style of the first half, winning over the reader, shows a perfection in reasoning and self-confidence which convinces in its own right. The last half, life among the Patagonians, is a very weak second to the Isle frivole. The ending totally reverts to the forced style of the letters to "un grand" and "une jeune dame".

> "Au lieu d'une Lettre, j'ai presque fait un Livre; je ne vous souhaite ni leur taille, ni leur force. Tout est bien comme vous le savez, dans le meilleur des mondes possibles: mais je fais pour vous la priere de Socrate, mentem sanam in corpore sano. Jouissez long-tems, dans un corps bien sain, de votre raison, la raison des Philosophes; vos amis & les Sciences y gagneront. FAREWELL."[135]

Firstly, he had already used the letter-turned-book excuse several times previously. The size and strength of the giants have nothing to do with what precedes or what follows. The candidean belief in the best of all possible worlds could vaguely apply to portions of Coyer's philosophy, but again is irrevelant to his present termination, and is blatantly

unoriginal. Since he has already assumed that his audience is composed of philosophes, he would surely have no reason to translate the citation from Socrates: unnecessary over-explanation. Joining the "raison des Philosophes" with the thought that Maty's friends and science in general (even knowledge, as an extension) would profit, was a pat on his own back, for he obviously included himself in each group. Finally, the English "farewell", plus a translated Latin saying in the same sentence result in a overly vigorous attempt to impress his readers with his own knowledge. Coyer himself admitted that while he could read English, speaking and understanding it were very difficult for him at best. The overall result of the pamphlet is uneven.

The cleverness of Coyer's use of logic and isolated facts is startlingly different from what should have been his strongest point, the exposition of his ideal plan, which remains as simple and unmoving as the dullest of the Bagatelles. Simple, unmodified sentences lined up one behind the other, hurry the reader through a series of scarcely related, ordinary requirements for a imaginary civilization, whose ideas had appeared many times before, under the names of many authors. Every point covered can be traced to another (or several other) of Coyer's publications. It was psychologically important for Coyer to write this piece as Maty's personal friend. It concretely established the abbé as a man who knew important people, who thought "philosophical" thoughts, whose ideas could better his own society if

people would listen to him. He had only to look around him to see, in fact, that people were not listening to him. Only a shadow of what he had suggested during a lifetime began to take form before he died. One year before his death, the fiery Jesuit emerges from the heretofore quiet, self-effacing philosophe.

From the beginning to the end in Essai sur la prédication, carême entire, en un seul discours Coyer is a belligerant preacher. This is truly a sermon to his sinful flock, shouted from a seat near heaven which permitted Coyer to judge all without being included in the throng. He states that Carême was published at Mount Sinai, as though it were another Sermon on the Mount. In several places he assumes a holier-than-thou attitude as if age necessarily brought with it a purity or purgation of all sins. As a minister of God, he is accusing those who profess to be christians and citizens, of lies, deception, and blindness to their own situation.

> "Viendra un jour, le dernier jour lorsque le Soleil s'éteindra, lorsque les Mers se souleveront contre les terres, lorsque des milliers de volcans s'embrâseront de toutes parts, lorsque le soufre, le bitume, les métaux enflammés s'élanceront par torrent du sein des Montagnes, lorsque le Grand Juge assis sur les nuées reparaîtra pour vous juger, alors vous le reconnaîtrez malgré vous; mais quelles vertus Chrétiennes porterez-vous à son Tribunal? Aucune! Ne dites donc pas que vous êtes Chrétiens, s'il vous reste une ombre de raison."136

Coyer wrote with incandescent passion. One long sentence charged with flaming images ("Soleil s'éteindra", "volcans

s'embrâseront", "soufre", "bitume", "métaux enflammés") and violence ("se souleveront", "s'élanceront par torrent"), intensified by a repeated, almost hissed "lorsque", all spew forth to inundate the sinner with the most powerful natural sources in the world: the sun, volcanoes, mountains. More powerful even than nature are its creator, "le grand Juge", and his tribunal. He impresses upon them the inevitability of judgement day ("malgré vous"). His long sentence ends in a question. Whereas Coyer's answers to his own questions are usually superfluous, in this case his one word response is impressive. The finality and desolation embodied in "Aucune", which he must certainly have shouted in a stage whisper, left no room for comment or refutation from his listeners. He follows his condemnation by an insult such as one would expect from a teacher to a student, or a parent to a child,"s'il vous reste une ombre de raison," that quality most esteemed by the philosophes.

This final publication is the only one in which Coyer openly finds fault with the philosophes as a group. Here, as elsewhere he chastises government leaders, writers, warriors, even the monarch, for their laxity in helping create good citizens from average men. To his death, his main concern remains with the people. But the people's defender has taken on a new face.

The kind, amusing, agreable abbé has become hardened to empty supplications as he walls himself off from his fellow man. All compassion seems to have disappeared in

Carême, especially in his last sentence. The God who created man to be just, virtuous, and holy has also showed Coyer, his minister,

> "la mort éternelle qui vous est destinée, mais il ne me défend pas de pleurer sur vous, & de prier pour votre conversion."137

What a radical change in Coyer. Never before would he have refused a benediction. From his isolated, elevated position, the tears he sheds for them are empty and bitter, with no balm to protect them from consuming damnation. This tone is constant throughout.

Equally as constant and striking stylistically is the direct contact the author achieves through the continual use of "vous", alternating with imperatives in the same person. The present tense is all that is necessary. The problem as Coyer sees it is real and menacing; it must be taken care of immediately, in the present--the future will be too late. The entire effect of Carême is different from anything Coyer had written previously.

But then, the Coyer who wrote Carême is not the Coyer who charmed in the Bagatelles, objectively reported in Sobieski, or took up the civic sword in Noblesse. It is easy to see in Carême an old man, sick in spirit and in body, deeply touched by the disappointments in his career, and, since he was always imbued with the energy and desire to serve, the ultimate failure in that part of his life which made itself visible in every word the author wrote. It is for that reason that Carême must be considered as a work

apart. Aside from this ultimate purgation, examination of all his other publications shows the literary development of the abbé Coyer.

The abbé's stylistic patterns follow exactly his personality patterns. Coyer's most characteristic trait is constancy. Throughout his life he remained basically timid and self-effacing. Towards the apex of his career, the success of individual works and his eventual acceptance into an intellectual milieu to which he longed to participate, strengthened his literary courage. An obvious influence on his personality and writing were the physical and social elements which surrounded him at certain times in his life. A parallel look at his life and his works will give interesting results.

Coyer's one dream in life was to be able to sit in the "great philosopher's chair". The best way to make contacts was through his employers and through the superficial salon life so popular during his early period. Salon life and Jesuitism influence, permeated with his serious religious and moralistic training, all combined to produce the Bacheliers morales. The overbearing constancy in his makeup set firmly in these pamphlets note the stylistic devices and topics which followed Coyer throughout his career. His desire to correct his generation's corrupt mores determined the subject matter in each. His calling to teach and the fact that he had always taught children influenced the style towards

simplicity in all elements: absence of modifiers, simple tense verbs (usually present tense), repetition of ideas or parts of speech for stress and rapidity, support from ancient and modern history, and a thread of utility as a primary requirement. The "miel de Narbonne" had already "tourné" verbally in Coyer's frivolous first stage. According to witnesses, this trait remained in his personality in other phases although he eliminated it from his writing in large measure.

Success and criticism yielded positive stylistic results in the next step of Coyer's development . He became aware of his penchant for history and his call for public service. At the same time, his tongue became bolder and his style richer through allusions and metaphors. Colorful images with a straightforward approach produced a writer closer to what the philosophes represented as a group, which was precisely the abbé's aim. Criticism continued. Because it was in his own literary philosophy, and because he felt that his present methods were not reaching his readers sufficiently, Coyer changed genres often in his most fruitful period: pure history, pure economics, epistolary endeavors, speeches, more pamphlets, philosophical tales, treatises, return to light fantasy, sermons--he tried nearly every approach except poetry and drama. He varied his tone just as he did his methodology: serious, gay, angry, chastising, sarcastic, ironic, kind, piteous. Maturity of mind and body and pen gave Coyer the fleeting "gloire" that he

considered the writer's true reward. The enthusiasm so obvious at the peak of this literary pyramid began to wane as the author got older.

The end of his career showed a return to the same stylistic faults which had plagued Coyer as a young man. His imagination became tired, his efforts were fewer, and his output dwindled. Only sporadic bursts of a jaundiced passion remained in the old writer. His social contacts were few and his pieces showed a solitary, disappointed preacher who realized that his career had not produced all he had anticipated and longed for.

Coyer was an "écrivain de troisième ordre" because of the very constancy that dominated his personality. He obstinately employed the same stylistic inadequacies throughout his career. Even in his brilliant and clever spurts, rare though they were, there were always scattered remnants of the frequently criticized faults: the repetition, the <u>précieux</u> mannerisms, uninspiring lists, blatant moralizing. Coyer neither rose gradually nor in one seering burst to the topmost rank of the literary hierarchy. Instead, the persistent unevenness always weighted down those portions which should have led him to fame.

Just as constant as his various stylistic characteristics were the continual themes of good citizenship and protection of <u>le peuple</u>. They are ubiquitous. No other topics received more attention during his thirty-five years of writing. In both realms, the author was ahead of his

time. Undoubtedly, this constant deviation from the center line of acceptance which he carefully toed in most matters, brought on contemporary criticism that was to be silenced thirty or fifty years after his death. Citizenship and the people deserve special attention as highlights of the abbé Coyer's inspirations.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER IV

[1]Les Masques, and l'Astrologue du jour, if in fact Coyer is the author of the latter.

[2]L'Année merveilleuse is quite similar to a short piece by Swift, and La Magie démontrée resembles Montesquieu, Le Sage, d'Argens, or others who showed their own country through the eyes of exotic foreigners.

[3]Carême

[4]Grand, p. 126.

[5]Dame, pp. 219, 220.

[6]During the entire eighteenth century belles lettres represented the greatest public interest, compared to all other genres, and did so on a rising scale. More authors requested and were granted permission here, and more space was devoted to discussion and criticism in publications. Ehrard and Roger, "Deux périodiques", pp. 48, 54; Furet, "La librairie du royaume de France", pp. 21, 23.

[7]p. 37.

[8]p. 77.

[9]p. 105.

[10]p. 121.

[11]p. 139.

[12]p. 54.

[13]p. 76.

[14]p. 120.

[15]L'Année merveilleuse, p. 63.

[16]Dame, pp. 230-231.

[17]Pierre, p. 48.

[18]Grand, pp. 136-137.

[19]Plaisir, pp. 113, 112.

[20]Ibid., p. 105.

[21]Magie, pp. 90-91.

[22]L'Année merveilleuse, p. 70.

[23]Pierre, pp. 38, 39.

[24]Grand, p. 124.

[25]L'Année merveilleuse, p. 64.

[26]Isle, p. 174.

[27]Pierre, p. 39.

[28]L'Année merveilleuse, p. 67.

[29]Isle, pp. 146-147.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Magie, p. 93.

[32]Ibid., p. 101.

[33]pp. 43-44.

[34]L'Année merveilleuse, p. 70.

[35]Magie, p. 89.

[36]*Plaisir*, p. 113.

[37]*Sobieski*, III, 79.

[38]*Berthier*, p. 12.

[39]*Prédication*, p. 11.

[40]*Berthier*, p, 44.

[41]*Prédication*, p. 104.

[42]Alletz, pp. 163, 177, 178, 492, and *passim*.

[43]*Siècle*, p. iii.

[44]*Ibid*., p. iv.

[45]*Ibid*.,

[46]*Ibid*.

[47]*Ibid*., p. 28.

[48]*Grecque et Romaine*, pp. 7-8.

[49]*Ibid*., p. 12.

[50]*Ibid*., pp. 17-18.

[51]*Ibid*., p. 23.

[52]*Ibid*., p. 26.

[53]*Ibid*., p. 40.

[54]*Ibid*., p. 64.

[55]*Sobieski*, I, 21.

[56]*Ibid*., I, 22.

[57]*Ibid*., p. 71.

[58]*Ibid*., I, 143.

[59]*Ibid*., I, 34.

[60]*Ibid*., I, 38.

[61]*Ibid*., I, 53.

[62]*Ibid*., I, 81.

[63]*Ibid*., I, 85.

[64]*Ibid*., I, 88.

[65]*Ibid*., I, 95.

[66]*Ibid*., I, 96.

[67]*Ibid*., I, 101.

[68]*Ibid*., I, 130.

[69]*Ibid*., I, 55.

[70]*Ibid*., I, 104.

[71]*Ibid*., I, 93..

[72]*Ibid*., I, 118.

[73]*Patrie*, p. 43.

[74]*Peuple*, p. 70.

[75]*Noblesse*, p. 50.

[76]*Ibid*., p. 55.

[77]*Ibid*., p. 109.

[78]*Ibid*., p. 23.

[79]*Ibid*., p. 37.

[80]*Ibid*., p. 132.

[81]*Ibid*., p. 32.

[82]*Ibid*., pp. 40-41.

[83]*Ibid*., p. 48.

[84]*Ibid*., p. 58.

[85]*Ibid*., p. 91.

[86]*Ibid*., pp. 114-115.

[87]*Ibid*., p. 118.

[88]*Ibid*., p. 138.

[89]*Ibid*., p. 9.

[90]*Ibid*., p. 10.

[91]*Ibid*., p. 11.

[92]*Ibid*., p. 20.

[93]*Ibid*., p. 29.

[94]*Ibid*., p. 83.

[95]*Ibid*., p. 10.

[96]*Ibid*., p. 62.

[97]*Ibid*., p. 43.

[98]*Ibid*., p. 50.

[99]*Ibid*.

[100]*Ibid*., p. 10.

[101]*Ibid*., p. 39.

[102]*Ibid.*, p. 29.

[103]*Ibid.*, pp. 213-214.

[104]*Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

[105]*Prédication*, p. 25.

[106]*Ibid.*, p. 66.

[107]*Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

[108]*Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

[109]*Ibid.*, p. 176.

[110]*Chinki*, p. 90.

[111]*Ibid.*, p. 76.

[112]*Etrennes*, pp. 1-2.

[113]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

[114]*Ibid.*, p. 28.

[115]*Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

[116]*Ibid.*, p. 19.

[117]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

[118]*Ibid.*, p. 7.

[119]*Ibid.*, p. 38.

[120]*Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

[121]*Ibid.*, p. 39.

[122]*Plan d'éducation*, p. xiii.

[123] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[124] *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2.

[125] *Berthier*, p. 5.

[126] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[127] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[128] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[129] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[130] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[131] *Maty*, p. 4.

[132] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[133] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[134] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[135] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

[136] *Carême*, pp. 23-24.

[137] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

CHAPTER V

THE ABBÉ'S HEAVENLY CITY

In keeping with his literary style, the abbé Coyer did not confine his exposition of the perfect society to two or three fictitious accounts. Instead, scattered throughout his works during the entirety of his career, the ideas which combine to depict an ideal government, physical structure and citizens, reappear, strengthen or contradict the notions which the abbé formed from his readings, his acquaintances, and his personal experiences. Good government and citizenship are the uniting factors in Coyer's diverse publications. It is ture that he was a moralist. He was also an historian, an essayist, and had several other distinguishing literary classifications. But each category in some way enhanced his real inspiration, setting up the structure for an ideal society.

The three publications which treat this subject specifically are disguised almost as though Coyer were reticent to entitle his pamphlet by its true design. The Lettre au Docteur Maty has the most obvious exposition. When Coyer represents life among the Patagonian giants, he announces at the very beginning that he intends to write their history "avant la lettre". De la prédication is incomplete regarding

a total picture of how a perfect government should be formed. He concentrates on the maintenance of law and order with the ultimate goal of creating moral citizens. _Découverte de l'Isle frivole_ is the exact opposite of anything ideal; but if taken as such, one can see, through this negative approach what good governments and peoples should avoid. Cover's two dissertations on "patrie" and "peuple" and the treatise on education make their contributions in a narrow and specialized way, as their titles indicate. The remaining portions which complete the description of his ideal society are less easy to point out, since they are scattered throughout all of his writings.

"The best government for his ideal society is the one which is the least corrupt,[1] states the abbé, which shows that even in his idealism, there is a portion of reality, for no governing body can be totally exempt from corrupting influences. "His body must be imbued with virtue in all aspects, and must place 'love for the public good' as the primary element in all its functions. Cover considered Geneva as the one existing city virtuous enough to be used as a model. In order to have a stable organization, the abbé structures his nation in the form of a pyramid, with the governing body at the very top as the powerful beam from a lighthouse which protects and directs. The enormous base of the pyramid is the body of the _peuple_. The succeeding layers are smaller, more select, according to merit, and are

higher, each layer of society more separated from the foundation of the peuple.[4] This formation is not vastly different from what Coyer knew at first hand in his own France. The existing structured society with its various estates differed from the abbé Coyer's ideal plan only in that his own country egregiously lacked the virtue necessary to operate successfully. He probably chose a hierarchy similar to one which he knew the best because he wanted his own nation to realize what would happen if vice totally overcame virtue.

At such a time, Coyer could see the different levels of his pyramid crumble and fall as the foundation rose up in protest. Each level would be at the throat of its neighbors and discord would overcome harmony. That would be the cue for a stronger, purer nation to step in and take control over the resultant chaos.[5] If Coyer saw this eventual downfall for France, he preached against it for reasons different from the true causes of the Revolution. The abbé's keynote was virtue. The Revolution was concerned with more urgent questions, such as hunger and political dissatisfaction. That Coyer did not preach direatly against the elements which contributed to the Revolution is not to say that he did not recognize them. His concerns were close to the fundamental disagreements which led to civil strife in France at the end of the century, but Coyer saw them from different angles. He predicted trouble more from the peasants than from the bourgeoisie. As for political discontent,

rather than black prognostications, the author chose to suggest what he considered more efficacious systems than his contemporary one.

What he suggests is not always entirely compatible with his previously suggested plans. In the same article with his social pyramid, Coyer also recommends a bee-hive nation, with disavowal of property and socialistic contentment revolving like so many satellites around the king, who is the father, mother, and savior image.[6] This confusion is understandable, for a generalized description of an ideal government as he presents it in Prédication is considerably easier to form than that for the leading magistrate and the ruling powers.

About one thing, Coyer is adamant: he is against an absolute monarchy. In an absolute monarchy, the people act in blind obedience[7] without freedom of speech.[8]

> "Le plaisir peu senti d'un Roi qui regne par le sang, n'est pas comparable à celui d'un Roi par l'Election d'un Peuple libre qui couronne ce qu'il estime & ce qu'il aime."[9]

Rather than the monotonous, passive obedience to an absolute ruler, the abbé Coyer prefers one elected by the people because of his virtuous actions. Since he is of the people and for the people, the elected ruler will work effectively with them. "Le Roi, la Loi & la Nation, trois forces qui pesent l'une sur l'autre, équilibre difficile."[10] The fact that Coyer had always had a great deal of esteem for the manner in which English kings and Parliaments worked together,[11]

undoubtedly influenced his opinions here. Whether his position was inherited as in England or elected as in Poland, the king should primarily be a figurehead for the nation, one who represents what the entire nation stands for.[12] In this role, the king appears as the father of the country. He shows compassion and understanding for his subjects, and rules as a "roi philosophe."[13]

Coyer saw all of the above qualities in an imaginary elected king for Poland. He describes this leader as one who leaves his neighbors in peace, so he can concentrate on developing his own nation's land and rivers with flourishing manufacturing, commerce, and finance. He will help form the great men who share his powers. All governing will be controlled through free suffrage by all citizens. He will impress upon the aristocrats that the serfs are as much descendants from a noble and worthy tribe as they. There will be no more servitude; therefore industry, arts, sciences, honor, and prosperity will reign.[14] Just as the citizens elect their leader, they will also elect a National Assembly charged with making the nation's laws.[15]

Coyer's main concern regarding law-making is justice. He reports almost total lack of justice in his own epoch,[16] and is acutely aware of how he feels it should be in his ideal setup. He believes that the injustice of venality in law jeopardizes the lives, fortune and honor of the citizens.[17] The obvious method to insure justice is through appointment

by merit and training. On the same scale, the laws and law officials should operate for the benefit of the entire populace, not just the rich and influential.[18] Hence every man has the right to his own lawyer, and to an open trial.[19] Universal justice strengthened by popular laws will insure the public of certain basic rights.

There will be religious tolerance (freedom from persecution[20]), freedom of speech and of the press.[21] Laws will be enforced by a system of punishment and reward. Rewards are for deserving citizens, based on talent and service: for sculptors, artists, writers, or musicians.[22] Punishments are for all stations of men, noble or peasant, rich or poor, if they do not abide by the laws.[23] Coyer hastens to point out that punishment is for crimes, and not vices[24]--an early plea for separation of church and state. There will be little need for strict policing, because authority in the home will be powerful and efficacious, be it paternal, marital, or master over servant.[25] Such authority will breed respect, and obviate the need for overbearing extra-home guardians. Still concerned with family happiness and concord, the abbé permits divorce[26] in his society where it is apparent that nothing save discord can result from continued union. This will benefit the nation because the individuals will be free to remarry under happier circumstances, and will be more likely to have more children, producing more citizens, therefore a stronger nation.

Freedom to remarry will also discourage extra-marital vice. Again the country benefits, for a virtuous nation is stronger than a corrupted one. Since Coyer was against all cruelty, from sports (boxing[27]) to law punishment, he outlaws torture from the system of justice and dueling from settlement of questions of honor.[28] The abbé carries his dislike for violence into the government's policy on wars. He is against wars, but finds them necessary when the nation's safety is menaced.[29]

> "Puisque l'Etat peut être attaqué, c'est sans doute une grande vertu de la défendre; qu'elle reçoive, à la bonne heure, les premiers prix."[30]

What his ideal country must practice regarding economics plays a large role in his thinking. The topic of commerce alone appears incongruously in quite unlikely pamphlets; it also occupies the place of honor in several treatises he wrote.

Being able to earn enough money to feed and clothe his family is the primary concern for every man.[31] A happy and healthy family is an important part in his society's economy, because it is more likely to reproduce and thereby increase the population. Coyer noted with alarm in all countries he visited including his own, that formerly thriving cities were falling into economic ruin because of a depopulation crisis. He was not alone in believing that France's population was not where it should be in comparison with the seventeenth century, but his figures were incorrect, for in

fact, there was a major rise in eighteenth century population.[32] These beliefs explain why the abbé is anxious for his ideal society to increase its size and contribute to a healthy economy. So far, everything in Cover's design is linked in the formation of the model economy. If sustenance is man's first concern, then now he provides for it is the major element.

Cover's society will be intensely involved with agriculture and commerce. No matter what the individual's rank or station may be, both categories offer suitable employment. Living off the richness of one's own land is what the abbé considers ideal. [illegible] to the primary occupation. Commerce, which Cover usually treats in general, is the lifeblood of the nation. Commerce and <u>luxe</u> go hand in hand since they are dependent on each other. Commerce <u>qui</u> <u>enrichit</u> is good, but <u>luxe</u> must be used in moderation. The abbé cites Pericles' Athens as a model.

> "Il refusa les commerces qui les corrompent, employa prodigalement des villes, il diminua considérablement les impôts, il mettait une partie des moissons impériales au profit de l'état, il fit des largesses à tous les pauvres citoyens, il empêcha les riches de s'enrichir à l'excès : pour qu'il mit en charge, les questeurs, les prétoures, les proconsuls, ne virent qu'un seul moyen de s'y maintenir, s'assurer le bonheur des sujets."[33]

This is the same basic plan that Cover proposes for his ideal community. The unity of the plan lies in justice, equality to a certain degree, and a vigorous poverty program.

It is necessary to control the State's luxe. He was already witnessing the effects of an uncontrolled luxe in his own time. Coyer, however, does not want to destroy all luxe because of its value in commerce. Industry, he says, helps commerce by raising the normal monetary value of specific items. A cut diamond is worth more than a diamond in the rough.[31] Industry insures more jobs, and freer circulation of money within the kingdom.

> "Il y a là des projets de nouvelles manufactures, des moyens d'étendre le commerce, de rendre la terre plus féconde, de proportionner le luxe à la circulation des espèces aux besoins d'un état."[32]

It is interesting to avoid a system where the rich can no longer see the poor because of their own accumulation of wealth.[33] In such a case of excessive riches, Coyer was witnessing increasing idleness, debauchery, and moral and physical weakness.[34] An controlled luxe, the abbé also implies controlled commerce, for there are certain luxe which lead directly to the cloth mentioned above by dint of their uselessness: "vermisseaux, ouvrlers en laque, en mosaïque, en porcelaine".[35] On the other hand, he continually uses England's merchant fleet as the perfect example of useful occupations for all classes[36]--especially for the nobility, since they would be increasing the nation's wellbeing without deroration of their position. It is interesting to note that in Coyer's "chicken in every pot" campaign, he still maintains a class structured society. It is the same

separate-but-equal problem that demonstrated the fear of the upper classes as well as the abbé's own concern with maintaining a status quo regarding his personal existence.

Intrinsic contradictions cloud the feasibility of Coyer's ideal government. Every man is equal before the eyes of justice, but not in the judicial hierarchy. All classes have the right to engage in commerce, manufacturing and agriculture side by side, but he assures the noble that his social position will not be changed. Ideally there will be no more distinction between "le tien" and "le mien", and yet there will be masters and servants, rich and less rich--there will be no poor; in that respect he never yields. In the physical surroundings for his ideal society there are opposing ideas, too.

The abbé's thundering condemnation of large cities is striking. And yet, he bases the architectural and cultural suggestions included in his plan on city life. Every blueprint resembles his beloved Paris, a Paris which he never spares in rampant criticism of its evils. What impresses Coyer the most about Paris is the constant companionship of luxury and misery. He shows magnificent "hôtels", but filthy, poorly lighted streets, impure drinking water, infectious hospitals and butchershops.[40]

> "A quoi bon cette rivalité d'étendue & de population? Plus les deux Capitales /Paris and London/ entasseront d'Hommes, plus il y aura d'infection dans l'atmosphère, plus de maladies épidémiques, plus de luxe, plus de cupidité, plus de cherté dans les vivres, plus de crimes, plus, en un mot, elles corromperont & dévoreront les deux Empires."[41]

The greatest evil of large cities is their corrupting influence on mores. This point is the raison d'être for the Lettre au Docteur Maty. Before unveiling his plan for governmental correcting of vice, Coyer lists the reasons why Paris needs help. He states that marriage becomes an open door to licentiousness; that fear on the one hand and excessive luxe on the other prevent both rich and poor men from becoming fathers; old men continue a life of libertinage while the young become old before maturity; there is always enough money for pleasure and gourmandise but never enough for paying debts or aiding the unfortunate; everything glitters with gold and gems while beggers line the streets; the strong live off the weak; money can buy anything including the right to judge and be judged.[42] It is for these reasons that Coyer places his school systems in the country, away from the corrupting influence of cities, where the children can be bathed in the purity of nature.[43]

He also places the imaginary Patagonian civilization in a rural area. Coyer's mental battle between the asphalt and the loam ends in a compromise. His rustic people are cultured, and their communal existence takes place in an idealized Paris. His ideal city is located on a river. There are numerous bridges to link both sides of the city. The bridges are unencumbered by houses and shops which prevent easy circulation of men and commerce. He locates all hospitals and cemeteries outside the city limits so as to prevent the

infection of the healthy by the sick or the dead. These hospitals have only one person to a bed. Vaccinations insure the healthy against epidemics and crippling or fatal diseases. Streets are paved and well lighted for the safety of the pedestrians. There are many trees and parks accessible throughout the city to give all inhabitants--adults and children--sufficient space for exercise and fresh air. To beautify the physical structures there are statues and paintings which adorn artistically constructed municipal buildings. Theaters, and opera houses for the peuple as well as the elite are constructed to supply adequate space for comfort and enjoyment. Multiple fountains are useful and decorous. Architecture rids itself of heavy gothic embellishments and takes on the grace and symmetry of Greek and Roman edifices. This city is salubrious, tastefully artistic, and yet maintains the simplicity of its rural surroundings. It is the opposite of the Ville de l'Esprit in Isle frivole.[44] In the ideal city, the inhabitants live happy, healthy and uncorrupted lives. They have the strong desire to serve the nation which they helped to build and where every functioning element, whether governing body or architecture, works in their behalf.

The citizens base their every action on the same honor and virtue which govern them. There is no question of the partial honor or half-way virtue that the Frivolites exhibited.[45] There is no problem with infidelity,[46] for families live in harmony, and divorce is permitted where marriage

cannot continue peaceably. There is no debauchery in youth, unfit and unprepared to fill the jobs awaiting them,[47] because their fathers have correctly reared them. Such a young man begins his job training as a boy. Indolence never enters the picture. Every man's job is posted on his door. The jobless are too ashamed to remain in their shiftlessness.[48] The motivating factor in the citizen's life is service to his country,[49] whether he be layman or priest. He bases his morality on fear combined with hope for and faith in his government and its leaders.[50] The foundation for this sound morality is in education and upbringing. The child learns by doing, and through the respect he has for his teachers.[51] The ground-rules for morality and virtue are the same for all citizens, although Coyer maintains a class structure. It is in the formation of these strata that the author tries to rationalize seemingly incompatible or contradictory elements of his ideal society.

There is a nobility in his plan, but he does not base it on heredity. He chooses the nobles on their personal merit,[52] by dint of their virtues and talents.[53] They learn their trades from the bottom up, like English sailors, rather than step unprepared into an inherited position at an age when they are hardly capable or mature enough to perform their duties efficaciously.[54] There is no wasted etiquette in court,[55] and no favoritism shown in their behalf, (eg., no more sermons preached to praise the rich and

ignore the poor.[56]) There is no opportunity for the nobles to take over everything, including what belongs to the poor[57] for the nobles themselves are under the control of the government. The nobility is subject to "la Censure" like all other citizens. The result will be more loyalty, more virtue, and more respect for the people.[58]

Coyer's plan for ideal citizens is strictly patriarchal. The father plays the leading role in the family. He must have perfect control over his wife, his children, and his servants.[59] This means that, in such a responsible position, it is first of all the chefs de famille who must maintain an acceptable morality. Coyer proposes a system of censors who will check up periodically on all houses. There is one censor to every ten houses. Twelve censors form a tribunal. Every one hundred censors have guardians who form a supreme tribunal, "Tribunaux de Justice", to administer the punishment and reward system that governs the country.[60] The women in these families think first of all of fulfilling their duties as good mothers and wives, in that order. They have happy, healthy pregnancies.[61] There are no more sedentary lives and constant complaints for the nine month term.[62] They breastfeed their own children and never bind them up (emaillotement). They see to it that the babies have plenty of exercise, fresh foods and fruits, fresh air, and constant physical exposure to the elements (no hat, no shoes, cold baths every day, a single weight in clothes for both summer

and winter.)[63] Living "naturally" becomes all-important for men, women and children alike.

Uncomfortably constraining clothes, decorated with laces and ribbons, give way to looser fitting styles which are comfortable and permit movement. Stiff, powdered coiffures, heavy makeup and perfumes disappear altogether. Men and women look their age and are not ashamed of it. Imaginary illnesses such as vapors stop at the same time. They need few doctors, because nature provides the necessary cures. Surgeons are an exception, but are rarely needed. The family is always unified and helpful in time of illness or need.[64]

In the ideal family, the parents love their children and shower them with affection. Instead of the eldest daughter being the only female child to marry, and the eldest male the sole inheritor and the only offspring with an honorable position in life, the parents divide their attention, help and possessions equally among all their progeny.[65] Family life is the center of all action. Simplicity of living does not take away from adequate amusements.

There is plenty of good literature, theater, opera, and ballet, totally different from what Coyer's own era knew. The ideal amusements consist of operas of nature, agriculture, conjugal happiness, friendship, one's country, or national heroes. An example of tragedy is the punishment of a great man who wanted to tyrannize a weaker one. Comedy

is good-natured farce.[66] Each play teaches the citizens to be useful and virtuous and thus preserve the strength of the nation.[67]

Another help in national prosperity is a sound educational system. Rather than the individualized education of Emile, or the prevailing education in the _collèges_, Coyer wants a combination of the ideas of Montaigne, Locke, Plutarch, Xenophon, and Plato. In this way, the child will learn about things before languages. With the appropriate physical exercises, the child's body will develop along with his mind. Coyer envisions subjects on the arts, commerce, war, jurisprudence, business, and religions.[68] He has even devised a typewriter system to teach beginners how to read.[69] This education is through separate social classes according to the needs of the State.[70] Here Coyer leaves his theory open to attack. He chooses the ideal nobility for its worth, virtue and talents. That should mean that every man has an equal opportunity to become noble. Yet, in educating the youth of the nation, the abbé sees fit to prepare only the rich and the noble for high, intellectual positions. He considers that basic reading, writing, and simple calculation are all that the _peuple_ needed.[71] The religion that Coyer includes in his plan is the only time he mentions religion _per se_ in the various theories which constitute his ideal society.

He saw the religious of his own time as basically useless and unproductive in the State.[72] Since the abbé is against celibacy,[73] his society probably allows the clergy to marry and become fathers. These priests must learn to serve their country before they serve the altar.[74] There is neither superstition[75] nor fanaticism, and the practice of all religions is tolerated. Following the same class-divided education that he suggests for the peasants, Cover likewise sees no reason to enlighten the peuple on details of religion. Myths and fallacious beliefs may remain as long as they are harmless.[76]

Cover reclaims every facet of his novel nation to benefit the peuple: laws, economics, entertainment. Despite the democracy which Cover seeks to instill, his separation of the citizens into classes prevents maximum help for the peasants whose miserable conditions haunt him. He feels a certain sympathy for these unfortunate people, perhaps because he came from a small town where he had close contact with them. Certainly his kind nature and generosity of spirit towards his fellow man are operative factors in his concern. Whatever Cover's motivation may be, he never stops working for the people's cause, and considers that they are worthy of a better lot than their present one.

For the abbé, the peuple are the foundation of the country.[77] They are the most useful, the most virtuous and the most respectable segment of the nation.[78]

> "Il laboure nos terres, il cultive nos jardins, il fouille nos mines & nos carrières, il dessèche nos marais, il nettoye nos rues, il bâtit nos maisons, & fabrique nos meubles "[79]

Their utility is a major reason why Coyer has such respect for them and continually contrasts their life to the wasted, lazy existence of the nobility. However, a telltale repeated personal pronoun indicates why Coyer maintains class divisions in his ideal society, and why his democracy is not a total democracy. He includes himself in the group of those served by the peuple. While he desperately wants to ameliorate their conditions, he is not anxious to lose his own position in the social world by giving every citizen total equality. This viewpoint does not prevent the abbé from having a profound understanding of the people. Their worth and capabilities place them as a sound foundation for the country. To maintain a firm structure, the base must be solid and unmoving. This could be one reason why he prefers to furnish the peasants with a minimum of education and little religious explanation.[80] Both a strong religion and a basic stupidity are uniting factors. A unified people with a minimum of physical discomfort is all that is necessary for national stability vis-à-vis civil strife. He tries to warn his fellow aristocrats that without this, every link in the nation's chain will break and a chaotic situation will lead to eventual subjugation by a stronger country.[81] If the nobility respects the people,[82] then a reciprocal respect results, for such a respect on the part of the upper

classes makes them sensitive to the feelings and conditions of the people. If their problems are apparent and the nobles are sensitive to them, then they will set about rectifying the situation.

Certain of Coyer's ideas, such as to tax the rich and give the proceeds to the poor,[83] were harder for the nobles of his day to swallow, since their own financial situation was not very rosy on the whole. But Coyer foresaw this problem and made numerous detailed plans (Noblesse commerçante) to refill the noble purses. His overall outline is well planned. If the nobles will help themselves, then the national economy will benefit as well as the physical well-being of the peuple. The latter will also aid the nation because of the stability that will result. It is undoubtedly for just such a reason that the abbé sees no necessity of doing away with a class system in his ideal society. The changes that he makes in the composition of the nobility via election for worth and virtue, are all he needs for his plan to run smoothly. Coyer is perceptive. He sees through the weaknesses of all the classes. He understands their motivations and can predict their reactions.

His understanding of the reactions of the people is particularly acute. In comparison to the apathy of the educated upper class regarding religion versus atheism, Coyer shows a penetrating view of the people's reaction. The bourgeois and noble religion is so temperate that, if its

adherents embraced atheism, they would scarcely lift a finger to uphold it, while:

> "le peuple, s'il y donnoit, se feroit brûler ou brûleroit les autres."[84]

Few of his contemporaries recognized the power of a united populace. Aggravation of their present conditions, unheeded as Coyer showed them to the aristocrats, was one factor in the upheavals after 1789.

> "Il souffre la faim, le chaud, le froid, la hauteur des grand, l'insolence des riches, le brigandage les traitans, le pillage des commis, le ravage même des bêtes fauves, qu'il n'ose écarter de ses moissons par respect pour les plaisirs des puissans."[85]

The peasant in Coyer's mind had no rights. He suffered his misery in silence. The graphic image titled <u>Plaisir pour le peuple</u> showing how easily the rich beat down the poor, and how the poor should be grateful that their lives were spared,[86] was but one instance where Coyer tried to make real a situation which the nobles preferred to ignore. He tried again, when parable did not succeed, to draw a parallel circumstance with the Polish peasants, whose life was still more miserable than that of the French peasants.[87] The peasant of his own nation had no possessions.[88] He had nothing to give except his good work; but even that did not bring home sufficient bread for himself and his family.[89] With a feudal system practically dead, the lord still controlled every facet of the peasant's life. He did not give the peasant monetary aid, did not help him in times of

injustice did nothing to help marry his children, and reacted towards him by personal whim.[90]

The law worked against the peasant, too. Without money he had no help in the courts.[91]

> "Je croyons pas ce que disent quelques esprits chagrins, que la fortune & le nom rendent blanc ce qui est noir; la justice est juste: mais elle considére avec les casuistes qui ne se trompent jamais, que les gens bien nés ne peuvent se porter au crime, sans quelque renversement dans les idées, quelque delire, quelque aliénation d'esprit; en un mot, la loi les voit toujours dans le cas des enfans, qui n'ont pas assez de raison pour se faire prendre; au lieu que le peuple en a toujours de reste."[92]

Taxes were a heavier burden than he could manage,[93] sometimes amounting to one-third or four-fifths of his revenue, with feudal rights taking another one-tenth. Often ninety per cent of the peasants did not have enough land from which to feed their families. Even in a good harvest season, there was barely enough to eat. A famine year made the situation impossible. If he were not a farmer, the lack of available jobs drove him into vagrancy or mendicancy. At each crisis or epidemic, the poor suffered more than ever, because the charitable organizations were neither plentiful nor rich enough to help them very much.[94] Women were driven into prostitution more from poverty than from vice.[95]

It is no wonder that the abbé Coyer sought to protect and help these suffering people, citizens of his own nation. By the qualities which they possessed in their wretched state, he found them to be worthier of his efforts than the indolent, corrupted rich. The <u>peuple</u>, Coyer believed, were

honest, religious, virtuous, and most of all, useful. The Quakers could be a good model for the people to copy.[96] In his ideal society, there is no one without means by which to live. Everyone has work, without the rigid barriers of trade unions. For the poor there are no taxes.[97] All the people have entertainment proper for their interests and mentalities (marionettes, theaters, opéra-comique).[98] In this society, everyone knows that "le peuple est donc composé d'hommes."[99]

All the men in the abbé Coyer's society are happy. He sees to it that the government, including the king, and all the people function as a well oiled machine. One helps and constrains the other so as to prevent crime and vice and to provide comfort and security. To form this nation, Coyer combines the elected government of Poland, the virtue of Geneva, the commerce of England and Holland, and the mores and citizenship of the Quakers. Many basic ideas resemble those of Montesquieu and Voltaire, but his citizens are more urbane and industrious than the Troglodytes and more worldly and educated than Candide or l'Ingénu. This utopia is not far from the idyllic state described by Rousseau, located between the chaos of uncivilized man in the beginning of time and the corrupted product of his own epoch. Perhaps Coyer's system was the next oscillation towards a pure state that Rousseau foresaw in the alternation of good and evil in the unfurling of time.

For all the likenesses that this ideal society may have with those of other writers, its paternity is Coyer's. He devoted his life to it. Every publication was propaganda for it. Although he never lived to know it, many of his predictions came true, a large representation of his important propositions were adopted in a later generation,and quite a considerable number of them are still in practice today.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER V

[1]Italie, II, 284.

[2]Prédication, p. 85.

[3]Ibid., p. 76.

[4]Ibid., p. 172.

[5]Ibid., p. 176.

[6]Ibid., pp. 107-108.

[7]Sobieski, III, bk. I, 407.

[8]Ibid., III, bk. 8, 135.

[9]Ibid., II, bk. IV, 29-30.

[10]Ibid., I, v-vi.

[11]Nouvelles observations, lett. XV.

[12]Maty, pp. 118-119.

[13]Chinki, pp. 14, 16; Sobieski, III, 85.

[14]Sobieski, III, bk. 9, 318-319.

[15]Maty, p. 119.

[16]Siècle, p. 30.

[17]Magie, p. 83.

[18]Plaisir, passim.

[19]Maty, p. 126.

[20]Nouvelles observations, lett. XVII.

[21]Sobieski, II, 135.

[22]Prédication, p. 69.

[23]Ibid., p. 119.

[24]Ibid., p. 79.

[25]Ibid., pp. 131, 132, 136-137.

[26]Maty, p. 113.

[27]Nouvelles observations, p. 88.

[28]Maty, pp. 130-131; Magie, p. 97.

[29]Prédication, p. 122; Maty, p. 116; Année, p. 72; Magie, pp. 82, 93.

[30]Prédication, pp. 122-123.

[31]Chinki, p. 12.

[32]Writers such as Montesquieu, Grimm, Mirabeau, and Voltaire helped spread the notion that population figures were falling due to: polygamy; diffusion of Christianity, therefore insisting on celibacy and forbidding divorce; slavery; wars; increase in infant mortality and death at young age; vice-filled large cities; famine; epidemics. Joseph J. Spergler, Economie et population (Paris: P.U.F., 1954), I, 83, 105, 203, 212.

[33]Patrie, pp. 26-27.

[34]Siècle, p. 23.

[35]Grand, p. 135.

[36]*Ibid.*

[37]*Année*, pp. 66-67.

[38]*Chinki*, p. 21.

[39]*Nouvelles observations*, lett. XXI-XXIII.

[40]*Chinki*, p. 26.

[41]*Nouvelles observations*, lett. III, pp. 13-14.

[42]*Prédication*, pp. 127-130.

[43]*Plan d'éducation*, p. 256.

[44]*Maty*, pp. 90-93, 96-97; *Italie*, I, 65, 301; *Siècle*, pp. 10-11; *Isle frivole*, p. 181.

[45]*Isle frivole*, p. 197.

[46]*Plaisir*, pp. 118-119.

[47]*Magie*, p. 83.

[48]*Prédication*, p. 141.

[49]*Patrie*, p. 10.

[50]*Prédication*, p. 125.

[51]*Maty*, pp. 80-86.

[52]*Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

[53]*Magie*, p. 81.

[54]*Italie*, II, 98.

[55]*Sobieski*, II, 386.

[56]*Grand*, p. 123.

[57]Magie, p. 85.

[58]Prédication, p. 149.

[59]Ibid., pp. 131, 132, 136-137.

[60]Ibid., pp. 141-144.

[61]Maty, p. 73.

[62]Dame, p. 235.

[63]Maty, pp. 76-77.

[64]Bagatelles, passim.

[65]Magie, p. 91.

[66]Maty, pp. 106-107.

[67]Patrie, pp. 31, 40.

[68]Prédication, p. 146.

[69]Plan d'éducation, p. 125.

[70]Prédication, p. 146.

[71]Plan d'éducation, p. 106.

[72]Magie, p. 88; Isle frivole, p. 180.

[73]Siècle, p. 34.

[74]Patrie, p. 32.

[75]Maty, p. 88.

[76]Plan d'éducation, p. 339.

[77]Prédication, p. 172.

[78]Peuple, p. 44.

[79]Ibid., p. 47.

[80]Plan d'éducation, pp. 106, 157, 339.

[81]Prédication, p. 176.

[82]Ibid., p. 149.

[83]Plaisir, pp. 108-109.

[84]Berthier, p. 12.

[85]Peuple, p. 51.

[86]Plaisir, pp. 106-107.

[87]Sobieski, I, 53, 65, 67.

[88]Magie, p. 85.

[89]Isle frivole, p. 183.

[90]Magie, p. 90; Grand, p. 131; Plaisir, pp. 114-115.

[91]Grand, p. 137.

[92]Peuple, pp. 68-69.

[93]Pierre, p. 52.

[94]Spengler, Economie et population, pp. 54-55.

[95]Duclos, Mémoires, 1ère partie, p. 69.

[96]Prédication, pp. 93-94.

[97]Pierre, p. 52.

[98]Plaisir, p. 105; Nouvelles observations, p. 84.

[99]Peuple, p. 70.

CONCLUSION

In any society men who acquire and exercise power, wealth or talent leave an indelible mark upon their world. Their posterity is shaped by their special achievements, and inescapably it reacts sometimes gratefully, sometimes irascibly to them. One's perception of one's cultural heritage is necessarily selective and discriminatory. It would be disingenuous not to acknowledge the overwhelming cultural debt that we have to Luther or Calvin or popes or generals. Because they exercised power or had talent they have been the prime conditioning agents in our own thinking. Their role was important. Today we are painfully aware of our failure to resolve a whole complex of political, economic, social and cultural problems. To the extent, in our confusion and desolation, that we are loathe to blame merely ourselves, we tend to reinterrogate and reexamine our past. We are no longer satisfied with partial and partisan explanations, nor can we accept a skewed or cavalier conception of the world we have lost. As we have enlarged the scope of our inquiry, the old elites are no longer self sufficient guides. We have a sharper sensitivity to hidden, inconspicuous or ignored elements which, of their own will, have begun to impose themselves upon us:

underdeveloped countries, a massive culture of poverty, the dispossessed within our midst. We are experiencing an inversion, not only socially and politically but intellectually. Scholars have reflected and in part inspired this malaise which has resulted in a re-evaluation of our view of things. We are becoming more responsive intellectually to the unobtrusive or obscured or timid or unvocal elements around us.

In literature, the traditional biographical emphasis on great men has focused on the darker recesses of their lives, such as Starobinski on Rousseau or Erik Erikson on Martin Luther. Others sought to broaden or democratise their view by eschewing personal confrontation with great thinkers in favor of the analysis of themes whose greatness did not make them the exclusive property of their exponents; themes like anguish, folly, happiness, or nature which manifested themselves on every level of conscious and subconscious life, which did not require membership in an academy or accident of birth or material success to experience (eg.; Robert Mauzi's L'idée du bonheur, Jean Ehrard's L'idée de la nature, Michel Foucault's Histoire de la folie.)

Historians have felt themselves impoverished by the deference they have been paying to privileged groups, to special events, to heros, and to turning points. Just as the literary critic has turned to the subconscious and the sociologist to the disinherited,so historians have turned to the faceless. Georges Lefebvre, Leroy Ladurie, and Pierre

Goubert have sought to understand the peasant whose massive demographic and social weight have never been properly measured. Soboul, Cobb and Rudé have turned to the urban masses who like _dei ex machina_ engineered revolutions indiscreetly and ineluctably. In the same way, literary historians have begun to realize that the all-encompassing talent and vivacity of Voltaire, the striking scientific _éclat_ of d'Alembert and Buffon, and the exciting verve and electricity of Diderot were not the norm or even the sum of the enlightenment. Their very genius places them on the periphery as well as at the zenith of their century.

Somewhere below, marginal in a very different way, barely able to see their own reflection in the shadow cast by this olympus, subsisted the scores of writers, thinkers, artists and fellow travelers who, too, believed themselves enlightened. In our context, they are the masses, the faceless , the nameless and, it must not be forgotten, the majority. It would be absurd to pretend that by their number or their aggregate contribution, they represent a more genuine and significant enlightenment. But unquestionably they represent a different kind of enlightenment. The abbé Coyer was one of them. The study of such a man will not yield as much about writers, society or the enlightenment as, for example Goubert's study of the Beauvaisis revealed about the Old Régime. But the examination of one man as a segment of an untapped source of information, combined with others

of similar nature, will eventually produce a broader, richer and more faithful perspective from which to view the period.

Gabriel François Coyer was modest, timid,solitary, and unimpressive in stature and personality. He belonged to three academies and sat side by side with Fréron and Palissot, but he never presented any communications beyond his acceptance speech. He participated in the activities of well-known salons, but the baronne d'Holbach avoided receiving him as often as possible. He probably applauded a ribold poem, read by some new libertine writer, but surely blushed inside. He knew and visited the celebrated inkeeper of Fernay, but was humiliated into packing and leaving the following day by the sharp tongue of the patriarch himself. His main concern in life was his career and the rewards he hoped to receive from it. He wrote about the same topics as hundreds of others who repeated or remoulded what the literary centers of gravity published. This mild-mannered, non-violent religieux set forth a revolutionary plan for a new government, and yet he remained stolid and unchanging all his days. He devoted at least a portion of every one of his works to defending the impoverished, but while returning to his home late at night to the luxurious home of the family who provided for him, whose name had been celebrated for generations, he probably chose the center of the street to avoid sullying his velvet robes by falling detritus or carelessly tossed slops from the shambles of the disinherited

he passed. At every turn he reported dissatisfaction with the useless fads and vices of the same society he worked hard to rise high enough to join.

What kind of world would this "prêtre sans prêtrise" have preferred? The courage and simplicity which Coyer wanted to restore in the French people had given way to a frivolous and lax life. Egotistical social aspirants pantomimed every facet of life set forth by the court élite. Activities, dress and language betrayed a cankered society. The government and the country's institutions demonstrated the influence of the moral degradation of the foremost inhabitants. Coyer would have remoulded the government into a macrocosm of his ideal structure, the family. A royal father-figure, to be elected by the "educated" segment of the populace, would instill a new and clean energy into the social order. Freedom, justice and virtue would triumph in both public and private domains. Coyer's literary audacity was considerable. He did not defend the Calas family, but he stood up strongly for the suffering peasantry. He did not edit a mammoth encyclopedia, but his Bagatelles reflected the temperament of his time. His treatise on education and his defense of the working nobleman are valuable contributions to the fields of educational theory and political economy. While no one now speaks of Coyer's history of Sobieski, they do read what the Chevalier de Jaucourt and Voltaire borrowed from it in their own publications on the history of Poland.

Unable to construct a rigorously developed plan, the abbé diffused his empirical suggestions for a better world throughout his works. The resulting effect was one of disorganization, fragmentation, and tautology--despite all the fervid intentions. Repetition of images as well as ideas and a stark simplicity in language tended to ossify not only what he wanted to say, but also his effect on his readers and their opinion of him as an author.

While Coyer was knowledgeable in many areas (ancient and modern history, economics, literature, morality, education, law, science, religion), and wrote about all of them, he always chose prose as his genre. He admitted himself that he was no poet, and his single attempted dramatic outline is farcical at best. A journalist before the era of regular press, he had the vitality but lacked the mastery to realize a truly impressive and distinct style. Staunch and reliable, his prose was regularly praised and occasionally celebrated. The abbé was undoubtedly quite proud to have one of his own works included mistakenly in a volume of Diderot's, and to have Voltaire himself attribute the Pansophe letters to him. What an honor for him to learn that the young queen was reading and enjoying his moral tales!

Ultimately, the abbé was true to himself and candid in his self-evaluation. He realized that his works were good and solid, but simply not among the best or greatest. He never sought pity, despite his frustrations. He asked to

be judged forthrightly, with justice, he said. His aim was always "gloire"--recognition of what the Greeks called arete. He labored for it all his life, only to be disappointed and disillusioned at the end. For he died uncertain of the destiny of his legacy and despairing that glory rarely reaches out to the margin.

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"Deux demandes d'audience de Coyer à Malesherbes." B.N. cote: Fonds fr. n.A.3347. Fos. 146 et 149.

"Lettres du Chancelier de Lamoignon à Malesherbes au sujet de Sobieski." B.N. cite: Fonds fr. n.A. 3346 F° 108, 110.

"Deux lettres de Coyer à Malesherbes." B.N. cote: Fonds fr. n.A.3347. Fos 153 et 143.

"Lettre du libraire Duchesne à Malesherbes au sujet de l'interdiction de l'Histoire de Sobieski et des contre façons qui s'en imprimaient." B.N. cote: Fonds fr. 22.191. F° 301.

"Projet d'arrêt du Conseil portant suppression de Sobieski. Minute de la main de Malesherbes suivie de ses notes critiques." B.N. cote: Fonds fr. n.A. 3346 F° 110/152.

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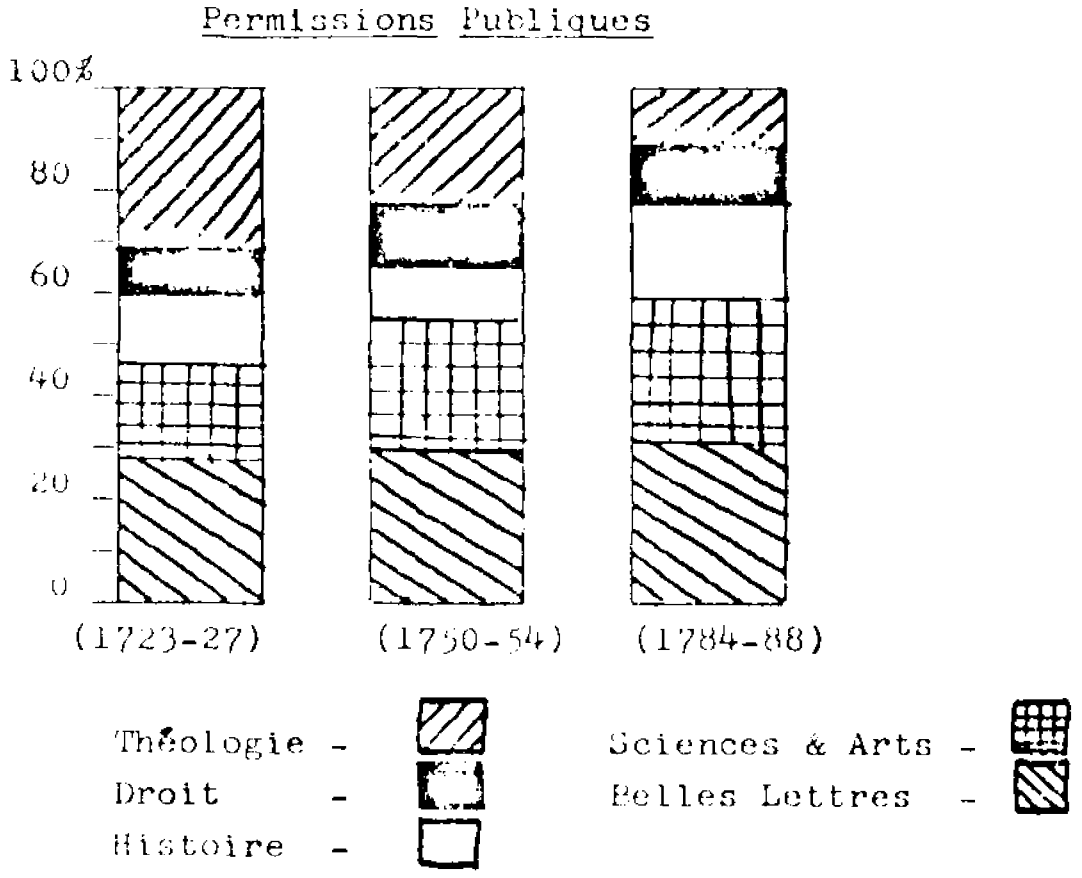
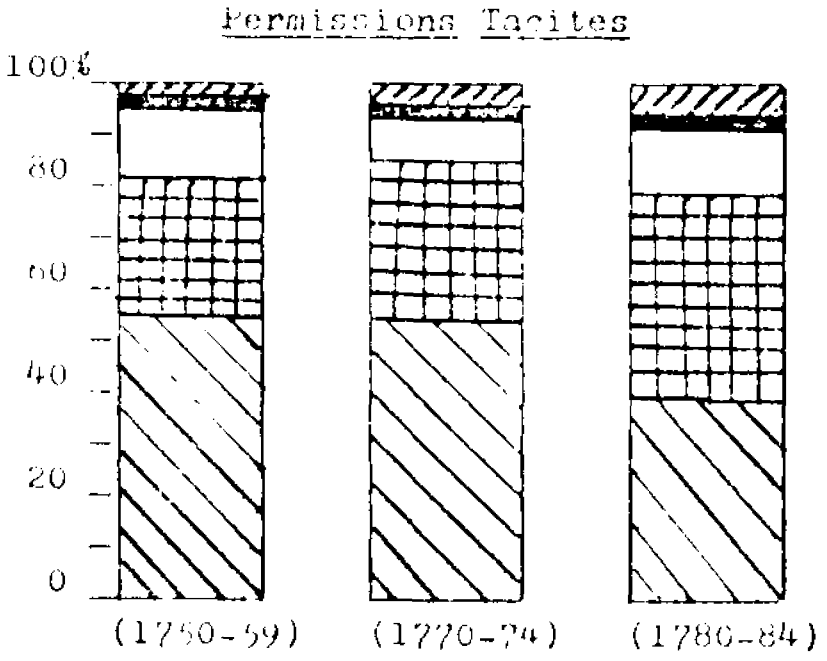
[2]Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris is noted as BHVP.

APPENDIX





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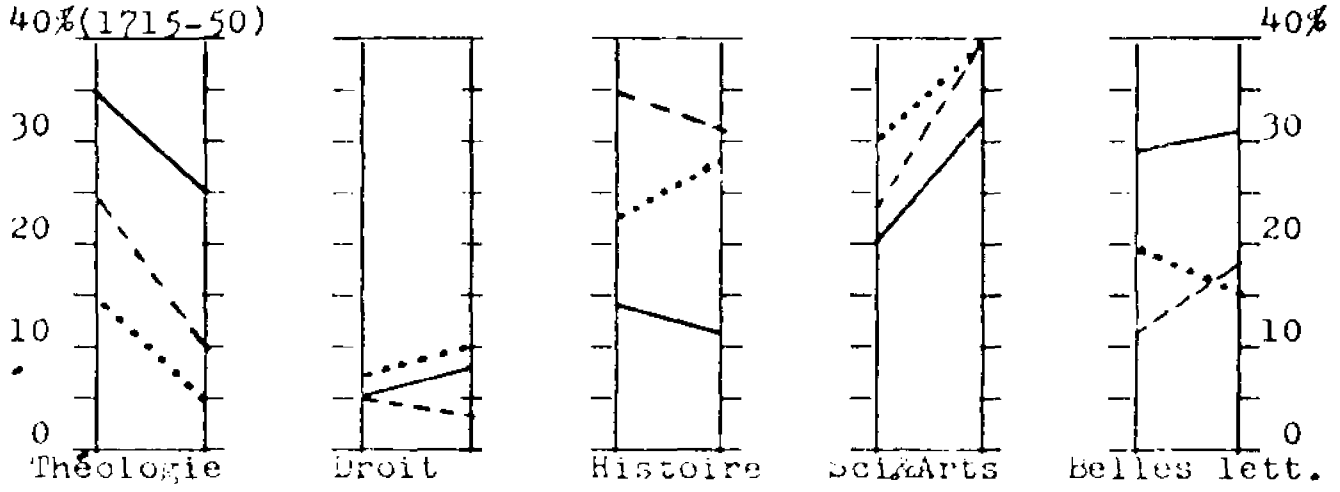
Evolution de 1715 à 1750 par Catégorie

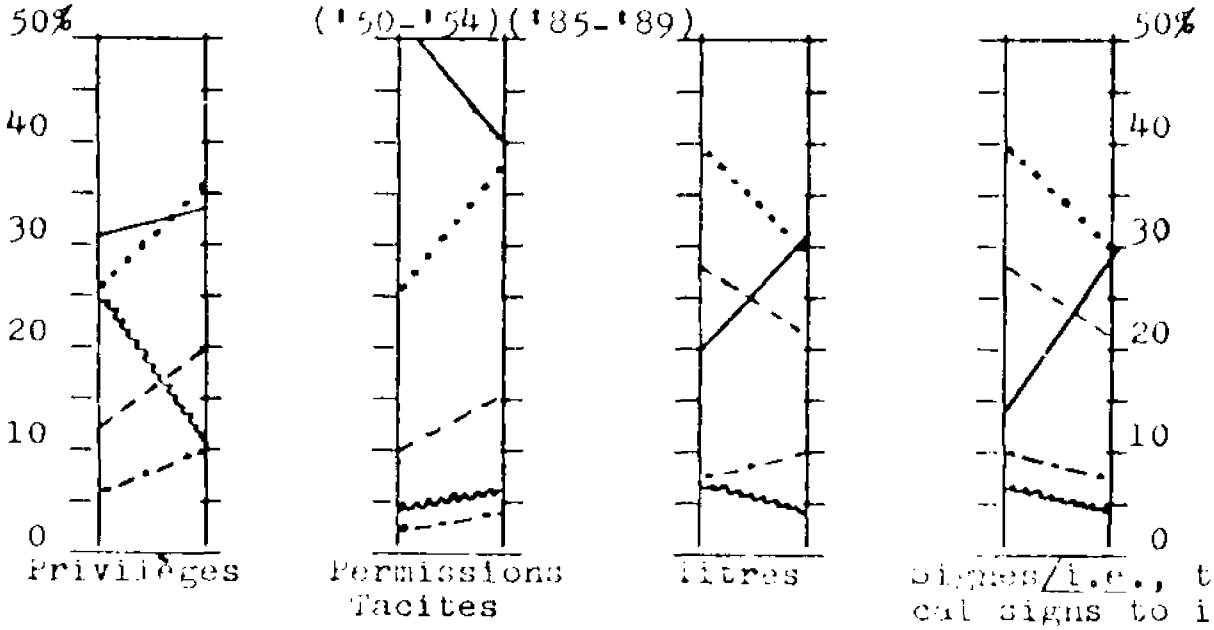


Demandes de privilèges _____

Journal des Savants ... ..

Trévoux _ _ _ _

Répartition Générale en 1750-54 et 1785-89



Belles lettres _____
Sciences et Arts.....
Histoire _ _ _ _

Droit. _ _ _ _
Théologie ~~~~~

Jean Ehrard et Jacques Roger, "Deux périodiques français du XVIIIe siècle: 'Le Journal des Savants' et 'les Mémoires de Trévoux'. Essai d'une étude quantitative," Livre et Société, pp.48,54.

CLASSIFICATION OF NEW TITLES
(Control group of 200 authors - 18th century)

YEARS	Art	Astronomy	Belles-lett.	Economics	Education	Law	History	Mathmatics	Medicine	Natural hist	Numismantics	Orations	Philology	Poetry	Pol. sci.	Romances	Theology	Translation	Travel	TOTALS
1700-09	4		11			1	29	4	9	8	1	5	13	24	2	1	55	5	3	175
1710-19	1		7			1	22	1	3	5		1	10	7	4	4	42	2	6	122
1720-29	3		6		1	7	16	2	5	4	1	1	8	10	4	2	16	10	4	100
1730-39	5		11				29	1	9	2			8	12	1	5	19	8	2	112
1740-49	4		13			3	21	11	10	12		5	3	21	2	1	26	2	2	136
1750-59	15	4	27		2	5	53	7	19	24		4	6	22	18		28	19	11	264
1760-69	24	4	14		1	5	35	1	17	19		10	4	24	16	6	37	12	8	237
1770-79	9	4	15		1	2	38	3	16	18		8	2	27	13	6	20	16	9	207
1780-89	3	2	11		5	2	26		10	29		4	8	29	20	16	19	8	2	194
1790-91	1		2				7		5	3			2	2	7	2	4	1	1	37
TOTALS	69	14	117	0	10	32	276	30	103	124	2	38	64	178	87	43	266	83	48	1584

David T. Pottinger, The French Book Trade in the Ancien Régime 1500-1791 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 31.

VITA

Jane Payne Kaplan was born in Richmond, Virginia on 3 October 1937, the youngest of three children and the only girl. She prepared for college at John Marshall High School in Richmond. In 1959 she was graduated from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill with a B.A. degree in Education with concentrations in French and Spanish. After a year of high school teaching, she received an NDEA Fellowship for graduate studies at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where she prepared for her doctorate in French. Recipient of a Fulbright Fellowhsip, she spent the year 1963-64 in France. It was here that she met and married a fellow Fulbright scholar, Steven Laurence Kaplan. Upon returning from this year abroad, she taught French on a parttime basis at Yale University. The following year she became a full-time instructor at Southern Connecticut State College in New Haven. From 1967-69 the Kaplans were in Paris, where their son Laurence was born. Since her return to New Haven, Jane Kaplan has been appointed assistant professor of French at Quinnipiac College in Hamden, Connecticut.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: [illegible]

Major Field: [illegible]

Title of Thesis: [illegible]

Approved:

Robert Lechmann
Major Professor and Chairman

[illegible]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Mary S. Metz

Lester W. Bontz

Orlo A. Fall

[illegible]

[illegible]

Date of Examination: [illegible]